RAGGED SCHOOL UNION:

ITS FINANCES AND ITS OPERATIONS.

THOSE who live on the iron-bound coast of Cornwall are often startled from their slumbers by the boom of the cannon which tells that a ship is in distress. What with sea-mist and the utter darkness, its position is alone revealed by the glare of the rockets as one after another cleave the air. By their flickering light the lifeboat is launched by men as brave as they are skilful, and they reach the vessel just as she is about to sink amid the mighty hurricane. The crew and passengers are happily saved; and it would be difficult to tell which feel the most joy—those who are saved, or those who are rescued them from a terrible death.

The Ragged School Union is in somewhat similar difficulties, as it has been on many previous occasions, through the death or removal of its supporters. It is therefore compelled again to hoist a flag of distress; but we doubt not that as ready a response will be given now as has always been the case when it has appealed for help to its friends and the public at large in the hour of need.

The fact is that the expenditure of the first eight months of the financial year 1874-75 has been very much in excess of the receipts. Thus, at the December meeting of the Managing Committee of the Central Society it was reported that not only was the balance at the last April audit exhausted, but that the current account at the bankers' had been overdrawn by £241 17s. 9d. In addition to selling out £500 consols from its reserved fund, it was resolved to insert advertisements in the newspapers to call the attention of the public to the work of the Ragged School Union and its present financial condition. It is true that the Union has a reserved fund, mainly derived from the funding of legacies, to which it resorts when in a financial crisis, or its very existence would be imperilled. But what would the collapse of the Central Society imply? Nothing less than this—the extinction, sooner or later, of many valuable though little-known Ragged

Schools which depend upon it for annual or special grants to meet deficiencies in their exchequer. That this inference is just will be seen when it is intimated that forty-one institutions reported in their annual returns last year that they were in debt £1,141, so that they literally live "from hand to mouth." Again, sixty-five Ragged Schools—or nearly a moiety of the London Ragged Schools—depend upon it for annual grants. In addition to this, in the year 1874 forty-one institutions had special grants voted, either to aid them in improving their buildings, or to liquidate debts which threatened their very existence. Every affiliated school, we need scarcely state, is equally eligible for annual or special grants, according to its work and its necessities. More especially the Central Society is anxious to help the local institutions liberally in *opening new Night Schools for boys and girls above the age of thirteen.* Hundreds of "roughs" of both sexes are still outside all school influences, either secular or religious, and their moral and spiritual claims Ragged Schools alone can meet. But, whatever the character of the appeal, the Committee of the Parent Society always readily responds to the claims made by local friends, each case being carefully considered after a personal inspection of the school and its operations.

Those who are familiar with the work of the affiliated Ragged Schools need no vindication of our labours, for they know what is needed, and what we are doing to socialise and evangelise the pagans of London. But to others who say, "Is there any room for Ragged Schools, now that the School Board is covering London with a network of well-disciplined Day Schools?" we reply by saying that whilst the duty of School Boards is to teach the "three R's," *ours* is to train the outcast or destitute classes, not only in morals and manners, but to show them that there is a life beyond the grave for which are all bound to prepare. Each system, then, has its appropriate task to perform, and in spheres so distinct, neither ought to clash with the other. "This ought ye to do, and not leave the other undone."

Our work-field has been so often described in these pages, more especially in those sketches of local Ragged Schools which from time to time appear in our magazine, that to repeat the painful details is scarcely needful. But the author of "Jessica's First Prayer" has so graphically described the salient features of the localities where Ragged Schools are planted, that we cannot for-

bear giving the following photograph from her "Lost Gip":—"At the back of these thoroughfares there lie close alleys and courts where the heat is still more unbearable. No current of air runs through them, and they are so shut out of sight that those who live in them feel no shame and no fear of being seen by any one less wretched than themselves. Theirs is a dead level of misery and degradation. The dirt becomes more loathsome, and the diseases bred by it more deadly. Half the children born in them die before they have lived out twelve months of misery. Only those who are singularly strong, and are specially cared for by their mothers, live into the second year. Babies' funerals are so frequent that they excite no notice except that of the children who have survived the common fate, and who follow the little coffin to the end of the alley, leaving it there to be carried away into some dim region of which they know nothing. As for the mothers, the greater portion of them seem to have lost their natural love for the little one, and seem to be glad to be rid of a care which would have made their lives a still heavier burden to them."

It was to meet glaring social and spiritual evils like these that Ragged Schools sprang into vigorous life thirty years ago; and that there is no abatement in the Christian zeal which first started them on their mission of mercy the following list of the operations of the 160 affiliated institutions will fully prove:—

236 Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools.
72 Day Schools.
102 Night Schools.
70 Industrial Classes.
81 Penny Banks.
54 Clothing and Boot Clubs.
11 Coal Clubs and Coal Depôts.
28 Free Loan, Relief, Loan Blankets, and "Emily" Funds.
35 Children's Dinners (4,500 weekly).
9 Sick Clubs.
73 Mothers' Meetings and Work Classes.
11 Fathers' or Labourers' Clubs and Classes.
65 Ragged Churches.
44 Bands of Hope.
10 Sunday Rest Bands.
45 Children's Churches.
5 Infant Nurseries.—Crèches.
65 Senior Bible Classes.

18 Psalmody Classes.
8 Open-air or Tent Services.
7 Lodging House Visitation.
10 Tract Distribution.
4 Pure Literature Depôts.

This list shows that, irrespective of Day Schools, nearly 1,000 social or religious agencies are under the oversight of the Ragged School Union.

Not infrequently the agencies of a society are much in excess of the population really influenced. This, as might be anticipated, is eminently the case with most missions to heathendom; but, happily, it is not the case with the London or provincial Ragged Schools. For they embrace about 30,000 children and above 10,000 adults—or, in other words, a population larger than that of some of the minor German capitals. We think that these facts and figures—and are not the statistics as striking as the facts?—tell their own tale too well to need any further enforcement. Nor will our appeal be made in vain to those who recognise how great is the privilege of not only helping to socially elevate our poorer brethren, but to teach them the gospel of the grace of God.

That all may help in this labour of love, the following incident, which occurred in connection with a Ragged School, will show:—A friend in the country had a copy of the year's report sent to him, and as he was in the habit of going once a week to read to some old women in the almshouses of the town, he thought he would take it with him and read a few extracts to these old folks. He did so, with this result: "In reading to some of the old folk I was particularly struck with the account given of a month's work, and so were they. Some very touching cases brought tears and sighs enough to move the most stony heart. After the reading, one old body came quietly up to me when the others were gone, and said, 'Wait a little,' and she put into my hand two shillings to help the poor children. As I left the house, another beckoned me to her room and gave a shilling. All were much affected, and if they had the means would no doubt give." We shall not spoil this lay sermon by any comment, but simply say to all the Lord's stewards, "Go ye and do likewise."

GEORGE YARD RAGGED SCHOOL, WHITECHAPEL.

New premises have just been erected for this Ragged School in Angel Alley. A short covered passage connects the old and new building. Towards its cost the Ragged School Union has contributed £100.

In addition to the other operations which have made this School famous, it is intended, the Lord willing, to open a Shelter for Girls, and in course of time to train the elder girls as far as possible for service. We hope they will eventually receive lessons on cooking. Once a week they will have an opportunity of seeing the food prepared for the invalid children, and some will be told off for nursery duty. Of course these girls will be placed under experienced women. With respect to the cookery a lady will superintend the class. She thinks of sending a woman and two big girls to Kensington for instruction in cookery.

From the *Morning Post* we abridge the following sketch of a visit to this valuable Ragged School:—

"The Ragged School in George Yard built for its purpose roomy, rough, and strong, seems like a fortified post of civilisation advanced in the wilds of barbarism. The schoolmaster is the captain commanding, and around him and his small garrison of teachers lie an unconquered waste of squalor, disease, and all the miseries born of poverty and unthrift.

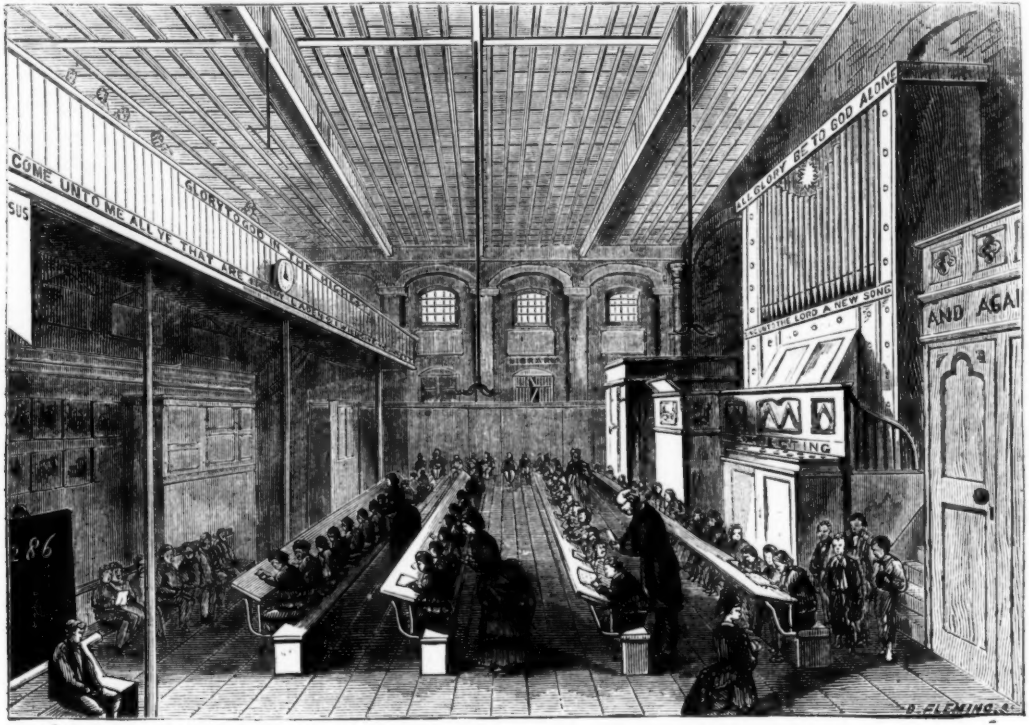
It was dinner-hour when the writer approached the Ragged School as a visitor, and a great clatter of sport and pastime echoed from the lofty room through the dismal 'yard.' There was a gallery at one end of the hall, and at the other a preaching platform; between them the floor space was filled with rows of forms and desks, whereon some of the scholars had laid out their bread-and-butter with an elaboration befitting a dinner of courses and dessert. Some, treating the 'crusty bit' as their baron of beef, placed that at the head of the board and dined off the joint in the old English fashion; others by distributing the slice around them in small and fantastically-shaped pieces, seemed to prefer the mode of serving *à la Russe*.

A glance at the children thus employed made vividly intelligible many things hitherto seen but darkly through the glass of public discussion. Could the decent scholars of the national schools be expected to welcome to their benches the outcasts of the streets? One of these boys, if his presence were insisted on in a school, would suffice to ensure the withdrawal from it of every workman's son; and no work-

man's wife would let her daughter sit with barefoot girls, whose hair was devoid of parting, which is one of respectability's distinctive marks. Great efforts are constantly being made to provide a remedy for these scandals of the eye, but in such matters want runs with fleeter foot than charity, and, do what they may to provide clothing, the school managers are still compelled to contemplate the depressing spectacle of an average three-quarters of a yard of trousers to the square yard of leg.

The superintendent is so shrewdly intelligent in eye, so kindly in manner, so unaffectedly devout in speech, that it is evident the children have a treasure in him. That he is not merely their teacher, but their second parent, friend and earthly Providence, is amply evidenced in his actions and in their words. He works for some twelve or fourteen hours a day—either as teacher, preacher, lecturer, or visitor—all the week round, and this amidst so much foulness of moral and material associations as might appal the stoutest heart. Schoolmasters of that kind are born, not made, and the writer cannot help feeling that they look for their 'payment by results' in a mode of reward which it is not in the power of revised codes to bestow. The board would enjoin a regular attendance of children, but how ensure it with exceedingly irregular parents who are literally here to-day and gone to-morrow, and whose necessities carry them over half the island in the course of a year? George Yard and its precincts are in fact in the similitude of a great railway hotel which may have an almost total change of lodgers in a week. The most that can be done with the children of such nomads is to teach them a something while they are under your hand, and to take care that what you impart shall be in the nature of that food which serves for rumination. Their home-life is environed by quite peculiar difficulties, and their history is as a thing apart from that of others of their years. In less than five minutes the master has quietly indicated one boy, 'whose father, you know, committed that dreadful murder in ——'; and another whose brother drowned himself at the age of fourteen. Men talk of the melancholy of foreboding in the face of Charles I., but for the fulness of that expression they should see this sad survivor of the suicide. A head swollen with disease, as though the impoverished juices of the body had flooded the brain and laid the faculties under water; a mournfulness in the eyes, stupidity's prophetic vision of its utter overthrow in the contest with the keen-witted champions of the world.

The suspicion that the schoolmaster must be a man of exceptional powers is deepened almost to certainty when the scholars who have gone home to dinner come trooping in at the sound of the two o'clock bell. How will he quiet this unruly crowd? Yet he does quiet it,



GEORGE YARD RAGGED SCHOOL.

and by a word, for he merely shouts, 'One!' and the children become as still as mice. 'One' is part of a system of orders by numerals with which the work of the school is carried on. Many-worded orders, as the master explains, cannot get themselves obeyed, and so these monosyllables have been made to stand for their meaning. At 'two!' the scholars fall on their knees, and at 'three!' their hands are shading their faces in the attitude of prayer. Other orders are subsequently given, and by the time 'ten!' is reached the children have performed several simple movements of school drill, have filed in and out of their places, and have generally converted themselves from a mob into a marshalled host. The girls are as smart at this work as the boys, and tiniest infants show a make-believe of alacrity which is not without its charm. One of these is too late for the exercise, and fortunately so, for she ought to be seen apart from the rest. A photograph of this infant should go the round of the fashionable stationers' shops of the country as one of our representative public figures. She is perhaps four years old, delicately featured and clean-faced; but as for clothes—well, she wears absolutely no other garment than an old shawl. Her head is uncovered, her feet are bare, and the shawl—a grown woman's in size—is thrown over the shoulders, then wound round the body and tied at the back, whence it droops like a tail. Two little legs appear below it, in ridiculous contrast of thinness to the bulk of drapery, and that completes the picture. The little figure becomes articulate with a petition from 'mother' for a 'peckote,' which is understood to refer to an article of feminine wear. The garment is promised; 'but there,' says the master, 'is our difficulty. If we clothe this poor baby to-day the things may be pawned to-morrow. We get over it as best we can by merely lending the things, but even with that device it is not always easy to keep them on the children's backs.' One great thing, however, he has found out how to do—to keep the scholars clean. They are ragged, but none of them are dirty. 'We insist,' says the master, 'that every child shall be sent here with face and hands washed.' 'And when they are not washed?' 'We wash them ourselves,' says the master, cheerily, 'and the mothers seldom want shaming in that way a second time. Come and see our baths.'

Of the ordinary kind of teaching—that which school inspectors recognise—there is no stint, due allowance being made for all the circumstances. The new code establishes three standards of proficiency, and about 150 children, or about one in six of the grand total brought within the circle of the school's influence, can pass the first—that is to say, they can read a narrative in easy words, write a few common words from dictation, and copy in manuscript a line of print. A fair number come up to the second standard, which is higher, and not a

few reach the third, which comprises, with severer tests in reading and writing, the addition, subtraction, and multiplication of money.

There is no room to enter into detail as to the encouraging results of the work shown in a visit to the master's room—photographs of mere animated bags of rags side by side with photographs of youths, the deformed of dirt and poverty transformed into cleanliness and prosperity, lists of lads in the North Sea fishery, in the Royal Navy, and in the merchant service, with pictures of Canadian homes and admirably-worded letters written therefrom. The work carried on in connection with the institution is indeed encyclopædic, for besides the Day School there is an Evening School, a Sunday School, Children's Services, a Band of Hope, a Sewing and Knitting Class, a Class for teaching the Sewing Machine, a Farthing Bank, an organisation for the distribution of food to the necessitous and medicine to the sick, Baths and Lavatories, a Library, a Swimming Class, Soup Suppers for street children, a Shelter for Outcast Boys, and a Home for Lads who have obtained employment—not to mention many other things of the same kind for the benefit of senior scholars and adults."

SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFASTS.

Sermon Lane Ragged School, Islington.

During the winter months over 2,000 breakfasts were given away on Sunday mornings at Sermon Lane Ragged School, Liverpool Road, Islington. These meetings are chiefly attended by the poor casual-ward men and women, advertising-board men, and the extreme poor of our neighbourhood. One hour is allowed for breakfast—from ten till eleven o'clock. During that hour friends of the Mission get into a quiet conversation with the poor people, to learn from them their past career, and, if possible, by a little timely help to raise and place them in a more comfortable position in life.

Through this means many men and women whose character has been found to bear the strictest investigation, but whose poverty had been brought on through misfortune over which they had no control, have received from the friends of the Mission articles of clothing and small grants of money, and have found or been sent to situations or employment, thus helping the poor outcast to help themselves. Not only have our Breakfast Meetings been the means of placing many poor lost ones in comfortable situations and employment at home, and also saved many poor creatures from starvation, but through this

means, since its commencement five winters ago, many who were willing and anxious to work, with the sweat of their brow, to provide for themselves and families, but quite unable to obtain employment in England, have been assisted with articles of clothing and grants of money from the friends of the Mission, to enable them to go and seek it in far distant lands.

Many cases were assisted last winter. But we do not stop here, as our work is not only to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, place men and women in a position to help themselves, and not to depend upon charity, but to go out quickly at the Master's bidding into the lanes, courts, and alleys of our great city, or wherever we may find the poor shoeless and homeless ones, and gather them in to let them know of a Saviour's redeeming love, to point them to a world of bright glory where they shall never know, as they do now, what hunger or thirst is.

During the breakfast-hour, *Bands of Hope*, *British Workmen*, and tracts are given away every Sunday. At our last meeting a Testament was given to each by our dear friend Mrs. Miller, the number present being 200, so that last winter upwards of 2,000 tracts, 150 *Bands of Hope*, 200 *British Workmen*, 170 large sheet picture wall-papers, and 200 Testaments were given away. After the breakfast-hour, a service is held from eleven till twelve o'clock, the preachers being laymen from the different Christian churches of the neighbourhood, or from the Evangelisation Society. Many most interesting cases might be given where the poor outcast and uncared-for creatures have not only been clothed and fed and placed in a position to help themselves, but to the poor the gospel is preached, and by the preaching of that ever-blessed gospel many souls have accepted of its offer of mercy and been able to rejoice in the pardoning love of God. The earnest and faithful addresses given by our dear friend Mr. Miller and Mr. Billing, at Cloudesley Church, were not given in vain, but were carried and blessed by God to many souls. We thank God that he has kindly given us to see some success, and that he has stimulated and encouraged us to go on. G. F.

BARCELONA MISSION SCHOOLS.

Mr. Lawrence gives the following interesting account of his Mission or Ragged Schools in that populous seaport of Spain, Barcelona:—

"Our schools prosper, and we followed up the desire of the Sunday School Union in regard to the day of prayer. We have some in

our midst, young and old, who are saying, 'What shall I do to be saved?' and 'We would see Jesus.' Some have been baptized. I baptized nine last week, and others are waiting.

We have a pretty large family besides our own household; God, our Father, graciously helps from time to time. Poor children! often when they are eating a substantial meal they do not know how many prayers it has cost, nor do they dream that we frequently do not know where the next meal is to come from; but it does come. Sometimes the children's 'bunnies,' sometimes a chick, has grown big enough at the trying moment to make up the dish.

You will be interested in hearing that Miss Taylor and Miss Payne visit the women's department in the prisons. One of the matrons has had a boy in our school, and so they have an open door. The great barrier is that so many cannot read.

Eight boys, under special training as teachers, passed examination in the Provincial College, and in religious matters the questions were very simple. The director was once a friar, but broke his vows and married. Five other boys, who have been with me from the beginning, passed the second year's examination in Latin, history, and geography. I have had to take some girls from the other schools, who have been very constant and true, and appear to have talent which may be put to account some day.

Next to instruction in the usual branches, Miss Payne teaches them to cut out and make their own garments. Miss Taylor teaches English and gives Bible instruction."

As in British Ragged Schools, this work has had a reflex influence on the parents, as the following incidents will show:—

"Not long ago a poor woman, whose husband is in the last stage of consumption, came to me crying, and said that her husband, herself, and six children were without food. I had only a certain small sum left, but I felt the Lord was trying me, to bring me into blessing, and I gave the poor woman what I had. Just after this another poor woman brought me a splendid fat duck, out of gratitude for good done to her and her daughter. Then the post brought an offering from some of the Lord's people. We buried one dear old lady in our new cemetery last week. She gave us great joy in her departure. When she was dying, her mouth being dry, she said to her daughter, 'Now for the vinegar and the gall.' Several friends asked if she would like to confess. She said, 'You can go to heaven, if you like, in company with priests and friars; none but Jesus for me. Jesus, divine Lamb, he will receive me.'"

Need we ask the prayers of our readers that these and the Free Mission Schools in Madrid, Seville, &c., may be richly owned in bringing souls to Jesus?

DESTITUTE CHILDREN'S DINNERS.

The Committee of the "Destitute Children's Dinners Society" in their Eighth Annual Report, state that the number of dining-rooms opened through its agency during the year was smaller than for some years past, and that the number of the dinners given also showed a considerable diminution when compared with former seasons. This reduction was partly due to the closing by the School Board of many small Ragged Schools where dinners used to be given, and partly to the fact that the less rigorous weather of 1873-4 occasioned the destitution of food to be much less acutely felt by the poorest classes, so that the sympathy of the public with the work of the Society was less excited. The number of dinners given was 86,553, but the grants made by the Committee amounted to only £723; showing an average of nearly 120 dinners for each £1 expended by the Society; while formerly the average was little over 100 for each £1. This proves that the amount of local pecuniary assistance obtained by the supporters of the dining-rooms was larger than usual, and also that there has been no diminution in that careful and economical employment of the provisions used, which it has ever been the study of the members of the Working Committee to promote.

Australian meat has been introduced into most of the dining-rooms, and, by the use of of the best quality only, the strong prejudice which existed against it has been overcome.

The destitution of food, though doubtless less than during some former winters, was still felt very severely in many of the poorest localities, and the Committee draw special attention to the following extracts from letters, which bear a strong testimony to the continual need that exists for this most useful Society:—*Laystall Street, Clerkenwell:* "I desire to express the sincere thanks of the many poor parents whose children have been fed by these dinners. Many I know throughout the week would have been without a dinner but for those provided at this room." *Lamb and Flag:* "A condition of chronic struggle is a sore trial to those who require help, and your Society has given material and valuable assistance to many families whose poverty has been of the most pronounced character. The children have not tasted of meat, by the statement of the parents, for months, but what your Society provided. Many of the poor creatures do feel and express their hearty thanks in tears for the kindness of the ladies and gentlemen who render them help in their sore distress." *St. Thomas's, Bethnal Green:* "I am sure it will rejoice the Committee to hear that many

of the parents of the poor children have expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the food supplied during the winter. Sickness and hardship are usually the lot of thousands in this locality, but the sympathy manifested towards them, especially in the welfare of their little ones, is deeply appreciated." *Chequer Alley, City Road:* "We have the thanks of the children and their parents, which we gladly transfer to the Board, for the help kindly afforded, feeling assured that great benefit has been derived by these meat dinners weekly. We trust that if spared to another season, we may participate in the same kind help we have received during the past season."

The Committee are specially thankful for this considerable sum of money entrusted to their care, as they see clearly that in consequence of so many of the smaller schools having been replaced by large Board Schools, where dinners cannot be carried on, it may become necessary to find suitable rooms in central situations, where, as in New Tothill Street, Westminster, children from all the neighbouring schools may be enabled to enjoy the benefits of the Society's dinners. To organise and carry out plans of this kind successfully will require a considerable outlay; and the Committee, believing that the operations of the School Board must eventually swell very largely the number of destitute children in attendance at school, earnestly invite liberal support to the dinners themselves.

The Committee renew the statement which has appeared in all their Reports, that no children receive the benefit of their help but such as are in attendance at schools, and such as contribute some trifle towards the cost of the dinner of which they partake. The Society has thus for some time past indirectly encouraged the habit of school attendance in that particular class of the population which the legislature has recently endeavoured to bring under the influence of education.

This statement of the Managers is confirmed by the fact that out of thirty-three schools thus aided, twenty are on the list of the Ragged School Union. The remaining "dinner parties" are held in equally needy districts.

The Committee report that they have received the intelligence of a legacy of £1,500 left to them under the will of the late Alexander Barker, Esq., of 103, Piccadilly; and also that they have received a donation of £150 from the Baroness Mayer de Rothschild and Miss Hannah de Rothschild, in memory of the late Baron Mayer de Rothschild, to be used in furthering the objects of the Society. These sums will about pay all the working expenses of this economically-managed Society.

Hints for Teachers.

ART OF QUESTIONING.

BY REV. L. TIESMEYER, OF BREMEN.

It is of great importance to give a few hints in our pages on the proper method of questioning, as there is an urgent need that the first principles of interrogatory teaching should be strictly followed.

Of course the Sunday-school is hardly the place where a very methodical system of questioning can be practised; for besides the fact that many of the teachers themselves are not capable of this, instructions based on such principles would be quite out of place in the classes of younger children. On the other hand, we believe that too little stress is now-a-days placed on a good method of asking questions: and the result of our teaching depends to a large extent upon the skill with which we know how to apply this art.

Questions as a whole may be be divided into three classes, viz.:—

1. Such as the teacher uses to ascertain the extent of knowledge in his children, and to prepare the way for that which is going to be taught.

2. Such as convey information and excite the thinking powers.

3. Such as enable the teacher to review and test his own work, and to satisfy himself that it has been sufficiently thorough.

With regard to the special matter of the language, the style, and the character of the questions, the following points are to be observed:—Beginners in teaching should accustom themselves only to put what are called the W questions—those, that is, which commence with the letter W; for example, *Who? what? why? where?* or with a proposition compounded with these words; for example, *With whom? by what?* etc. By so doing they will be saved from falling into many an absurdity. It stands to reason that afterwards, when they grow more expert, this rule need not always be followed.

Teachers should further beware of putting what we may call incomplete questions; *e.g.*, "Jacob had twelve —— ?" Answer: "sons." All questions that give the children nothing to think about, or that can, on the contrary, be answered mechanically, are to be avoided: *e.g.*, "Was it not a great sin for Cain to kill his brother?" Child: "Yes." Or, "Was it right of Peter to deny his Lord?" Child: "No." Affirming questions, too, should not be asked: *e.g.*, "It was a great sin for Judas to betray his Lord, was it not?" Child: "Yes."

Care should moreover be taken to put the interrogative word in its proper place: it is wrong, for example, to ask, "Moses, where did he die?" instead of "Where did Moses die?"

A question should be simple, so that only one answer can be given by the child. If, for example, one asks, "What did the serpent do in

the garden of Eden? and how did Adam behave himself when God reproached him with his sin?" there are two questions at once, to which the child can give two answers. Nor must vague questions be put, but only such as are short and to the point. As a huntsman takes a direct aim at the game he has to kill, so should the teacher at once proceed to the object he has in view.

Teachers must always bear in mind that the children before them do not all stand on the same intellectual level. Even when they are as far as possible of the same age, their powers of comprehension are for the most part very different. To neglect the backward children and only take pains with those that are more capable is to do a grievous wrong. Each one must, with conscientious fidelity, be kept in mind, and the weakest are just those to whom the greatest attention should be paid. It is not by a cold, heartless "No"—too often the dull child's only answer when he has made a mistake—that love to the Saviour is to be awakened and inclination for knowledge increased, but by a kindly explanation of all errors.

The teacher should make a point of saying as little as possible, so as to give the children the opportunity of saying as much as they can. Far too often is this rule transgressed, and disadvantage accrues to both sides from the monotonous nature of the instruction given.

Whether questions should be framed so as to repeat as far as possible the words of Scripture, or should be expressed in somewhat freer terms, is a matter on which various opinions are held. If the Bible phraseology be strictly adhered to, there is great danger of being misled with regard to the knowledge of the children. Their answers are likely to be much more correct, because they have the words of the lesson still ringing in their ears; but their reflective powers are scarcely called into play. If, on the other hand, the Bible words be exchanged so as to present the same thoughts in other language, the children will not be nearly so ready to give their answers, but in the end many Scriptural expressions will become intelligible to them.

It will serve as a general rule that stories of which it may be supposed the children know something should be treated after the second, and those that are fresh to them after the first method.

Now and then it is a good thing to address questions to all the children, so as to induce one answer from them all.

PRACTICAL MAXIMS

Dr. W. W. Hall gives the following practical hints to teachers:—

Move directly to your subject; the sooner you get at the main idea the better.

One telling illustration is better than a dozen, even if each of the dozen is quite as strong.

Let the subject be of such importance as to fill you with earnestness until the closing sentence.

Encourage rather than scold.

Do not make many points. Two or three well insisted on will be longer remembered than half-a-dozen.

Never think of yourself, but a soul saved or lost, and of Calvary.

Children's Page.

THE STORY OF TWO PATCH-WORK QUILTS.

THERE is not a prettier sight in Ragged Schools than the 2,890 girls who with nimble finger "ply needle and thread." Some make shirts for their fathers and brothers, whilst others knit or mend old stockings, and so save their mothers a deal of trouble.

Sometimes, too, they make articles as presents for their kind teachers and other friends. Thus our study rug, which is composed of nicely arranged pieces of tailor's cuttings, was made by and presented to me by the paid monitors of a Ragged Day School. And of all the gifts we have received there is not one we more prize. We can scarcely say which is happiest, they who make or those who receive such proofs of gratitude.

Amongst the other examples of gratitude, that shown by the Croydon Ragged School deserves record. In the garden attached to the school-house there is a noble vine. One evening the master was training it, when he fell from the ladder, broke his thigh, and has, we are grieved to say, become a cripple for life. He was taken to Croydon Hospital, and on his return to his duties, the girls resolved to present a quilt to the hospital as a token of their gratitude for the kindness shown to their master. It was very nicely worked; and, what made it more valuable, it was covered with Scripture texts in marking cotton. The hospital officials received it with much pleasure, and it is regarded as one its choicest treasures.

Last year the scholars of Barnet Ragged School resolved to make a patchwork quilt for the "East London Hospital for Children," which had kindly received and cured some of their little friends. This quilt they made very neatly. And O how happy many a little sufferer felt when he or she saw the beautiful quilt made by the poor children of Barnet. It was in fact almost as good to some of the ailing infants as a medicine. With the quilt, the Barnet girls sent the following nice little letter:—

"DEAR LITTLE SICK FRIENDS,—We are very sorry to hear that you are so ill; we thank God that we are able to run about and play. If we lived near we would bring some pretty flowers to put on your beds and make you think of the pleasant spring. How nice it would be if Jesus was to walk round your room, and make you all quite well. We know that He loves us children, for He said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me.' We hope that He will soon make you all quite better. When we were busy at needlework one day, our kind friend Mrs. Stone came in to see us, and she said how nice it would be for us to make a pretty patchwork quilt to put on one of your little beds; we all thought so too, and began at once to make it; we have spent a great many happy afternoons over it, and now at last it is finished, we hope you will think

it pretty; we have had great pleasure in making it for you. While we were busy at work we were told a great many stories about you, and we are very glad to hear that you are in such a nice place, and have so many kind friends. How nice it would be if we all loved Jesus and were washed in His precious blood, then, if we never see each other on earth, we shall meet in heaven, where there is no more crying or pain.—We remain."

To this letter the Secretary of the Hospital sent the following reply:—

"MY DEAR LITTLE CHILDREN,—I beg to acknowledge with grateful thanks the receipt this day of your pretty present of the quilt for your poor little suffering brothers and sisters under our care here, and also of the kind and affectionate letter that accompanied it. You must know that we have four rooms in this Hospital with nine beds in each; and what do you think we did with your letter? We thought it so kind, and so nice, so good and so true, that we read it aloud in each ward, and you cannot think how pleased and happy it made your little friends. Now, although we are very thankful and grateful to you for sending us such a pretty quilt, and such a nice letter, we are more pleased and delighted to think of the sentiments, the thoughts, and the feelings which must have their dwelling-place in your hearts, and have prompted you to such an act. Believe me, we thoroughly appreciate what you have done, and cannot estimate at too high a value the love and the charity which in this work has been so freely bestowed by you upon us, and which has come to us with a freshness and a power most gratifying and encouraging to all connected with this place. Accept through me the hearty and sincere thanks of our little patients who cordially echo your wish and prayer that they may in the hereafter meet you 'in heaven,' where there is no more crying or pain.—I remain."

These patchwork quilts tell the tale that Ragged School teachers do not work in vain. For poor little neglected ones have the same hearts as richer children, and when love is shown to them there is found the key to unlock the most hardened heart.

S. A.

Correspondence.

MISSION SCHOOLS IN ROME.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Now that the first month of our school year has closed, I think you, and others who have so generously sustained my work, will be pleased to know of its present condition.

On the 1st of October we entered our beautiful new rooms, 105, Borgo Pio, about fifty steps from the head-quarters of the Pope's body-guard, and 260 to 300 from his windows. On Saturday evening we had in them a delightful *réunion* of parents and friends. Sunday morning we opened our Sunday School. Monday morning (5th) we opened our Day School for Boys, Day School for Girls, and the Infant School. At night the School for Men was opened. The School for Young Ladies, 12, Vicolo D'Alibert, designed to become *wholly* a *Training School* for those who wish to teach, opened with twenty-nine, and the Sunday School with twenty-one. During the month there has been a vacation in the Female School in *Frascati*. But the Primary and Superior Schools, for boys and young men, have been more flourishing than ever before. Early in November the Night School for men will be reopened, and there will be regular preaching in the large schoolroom by the master of the superior school. On the last Friday evening in the month we had in my reception-room a social gathering of about eighty persons, consisting of teachers from several Sunday and Evangelical Day and Night Schools, Christian workers, a few parents, some very interesting young ladies from the Training School, and a few visitors. The evening was spent in singing, talking, addresses, and a cup of coffee. No one pleaded for *harmony*, for there was no *discord*. No one asked for the formation of a "Society" or a "Commitee," for each was willing that the others should work their own way, and was ready to "lend a helping hand" when he could. The feeling seemed to be that "our work as teachers is to lead the children into the light." Each went home encouraged and strengthened, and will with pleasure look forward to the last Wednesday evening in November, when we are to have another meeting.

I have been greatly favoured in securing as *Director* of my schools Professor Cocorda, one of the ministers in Rome whose scholarship, successful experience, and specially whose *theological* instruction under D'Aubigné, eminently fit him for such an important position.

The following from my teachers is their Report of the Schools for October:—

Vatican Mission.—Received and registered since October 1st: Day Schools, 114; Night School for Men, 89; Sunday School, 72. —Female School, 12, Vicolo d'Alibert, 39; Sunday School, 23.— Frascati: Primary and Superior Schools for Boys, Youths, and Young Men, 96; Sunday School, 65; total enrolled in all the Day and Night Schools, 338; average attendance, 257; total enrolled in all the Sunday Schools, 160; average attendance, 143; total enrolled in Day, Night, and Sunday Schools, 498; average attendance, 400.

The pupils of the Sunday Schools attend the Day or Night Schools;

but those in the Night School do not attend the Day School. The children of the Day Schools of the Vatican Mission are in great destitution. I therefore give to each a bowl of good soup at a cost of 1d. five times a week. To the other schools I give nothing.

Encouraging as are these statistics and facts, I hesitate to present them, because so constant and earnest are the efforts to prevent our success, and so uncertain is everything here. What is true of *to-day* may be very different *to-morrow*. One day you may find us *crowded*, and the next perhaps not *half full*. The earnestness with which the men study the Bible in the Night School, and in the Bible Class on Sunday morning, is one of the most hopeful features of my work. Pray for us, that many of them may be thoroughly converted this winter.

W. C. VAN METER.

Rome, November, 1874.

Notices of Books.

An Old Sailor's Story. London: Religious Tract Society.

Like all the works issued by this Society, this tale is not only brilliant but *safe*. This is no slight praise in a day when immoral or foolish tales are issued by the million.

Old Jonathan. London: Collingridge.

Edited by an old Ragged School worker, this serial has always a good word for our movement. The yearly volume is replete with articles instructive to old and young; and what is still better, every article has the true ring of the Gospel.

Glaucia, the Greek Slave. London: Religious Tract Society.

Rome and Athens as they were in the days of the Apostle Paul are vividly reproduced in this work. It clearly shows how Christianity braved and conquered both paganism and philosophy. We think that *Glaucia* would be a valuable addition to our senior scholars' libraries. In fact, a knowledge of the manners and customs of these countries is a great aid in understanding many allusions in the New Testament.

Arrows in the Hand of a Giant. By Rev. S. THORNTON. London: Partridge and Co.

An impressive New Year's address to parents by one who, when in London, took a warm interest in George Yard Ragged School.

The Young People's Pocket Book. London: Religious Tract Society.

In addition to much valuable information, the Pocket Book includes abridged but not distorted texts from the Book of Books for every day in the year 1875.

Ragged School Union.

At the monthly meeting of the Managing Committee held on December 11th, the receipts for November were reported to be £169 12s. 11d., and the payments £228 11s. 9d. The balance at the bankers' being overdrawn by £241 17s. 9d., £500 Consols were sold out to meet this deficiency.

Quarterly grants amounting to £137 17s. 6d. were voted to twenty-three schools. Repayments of £31 10s. 6d. to ten institutions named by the donors were also voted.

On an application for increased aid to Brewer's Court School, it was agreed to respond to the appeal if the Night School was reopened and the Day School rendered more efficient.

A special grant of £20 was voted to Dove Row School.

The Tower Hamlets Shoeblack Society was added to the list of recognised brigades.

The Committee being anxious to stimulate and extend Night Schools for roughs of both sexes, especially those of thirteen years of age and upwards, the subject was referred to a special sub-committee.

Applications from Schools at Hackney, Linton Place, Parker Street, Brentford, Homerton, and Price Street will be considered at the next meeting.

Facts and Scraps.

Ragged School Christmas Dinners.—We are glad to report that several Ragged Schools gave dinners of old English fare either on Christmas-day or during Christmas week. Amongst these were Hartshorn Court, Hope Place, Sermon Lane, New Tothill Street, Richmond Street, and Price Street. In addition, Field Lane dined 600 attendants at the Ragged Church, after a special service on Christmas morning. The cost of all these dinners was defrayed from a separate fund.

Ragged School Union Gifts of Clothing.—From the old and new clothing placed at the disposal of this Society, above thirty parcels were distributed at Christmas. In every case the most needy schools were selected. Other parcels of clothing had before been sent to schools named by the donors.

Gray's Yard, Oxford Street.—At a social gathering of this Ragged School, held on November 6th, a handsome copy of the Annotated Paragraph Bible was presented by the teachers to Mr. and Mrs. Pitts on their marriage. Mr. Pitts

has been for many years an earnest worker in this school.

HORSEFERRY ROAD, MILLBANK.—Two girls belonging to this Ragged School competed for the prizes offered by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The essay of one of these girls, we are glad to report, received the prize.

LANSDOWN PLACE, KENT STREET.—On the 19th of November the teachers of this Ragged School, in order to interest the parents in it, invited them to tea. About 300 were present, and paid great attention to the addresses.

MARIGOLD PLACE, BERMONDSEY.—The teachers have just opened a branch Night School for Girls twice weekly in James Street. It is quite a "rookery"; several cottages are out of the perpendicular, while others have fallen down through age or neglect.

NICHOL STREET, BETHNAL GREEN.—The Sunday Night School is in a very prosperous state. Not rarely upwards of 1,100 children are present in its various schoolrooms.

PRICE STREET, BLACKFRIARS ROAD.—So successful has the Sunday Evening Children's Church proved, that, by the wish of the scholars, a similar service has just been opened on Sunday morning. Few of the attendants are below twelve years.

SERMON LANE, ISLINGTON.—VISITATION OF THE SICK.—Over 500 visits have been made by Mr. G. Fuller, the superintendent of this Ragged School, to the homes of the sick poor during the past six months, and fifty-three cases have been relieved by small grants of money, tea, sugar, and beef-tea. Many interesting cases might be given, did space permit, of good done through these visits.

RAGGED SCHOOL COAL CLUBS.—These valuable clubs are attached to eleven Ragged Schools. Managed as they are—in every case the applicant paying some part of the original cost—we think that this form of charity is less likely to be abused than any other. In a variable climate like this, with its more or less rigid winters, fuel is as much a necessary of life as food. We should be glad to see Coal Clubs attached to most of the larger Ragged Schools.

CAMPDEN HILL, KENSINGTON.—At Edge Terrace a hall is in daily use for religious and benevolent objects. Two missionaries hold regular services. A Daily Prayer Meeting is established. There are also in active operation a Medical Mission, Soup Kitchen, Mothers' Meeting, Penny Bank, and Bible Classes for Children.

ST. GEORGE'S MARKET, BOROUGH.—On November 20th a Mission-hall was inaugurated in St. George's Market. It includes a Mothers' Meeting, a Sewing Class for Girls, a Penny Bank, a Band of Hope, a Temperance Society, and Religious Services, besides a Barrow and Donkey Club for costermongers.

YORK APPRENTICE CLASS.—At York an "Apprentice Class" has been conducted for some years with very great success, proving an excellent connecting link between the school and the church. The number of members is now over 150. At the recent anniversary gathering the number of present and former scholars who attended was very large.

A SUNDAY SCHOOL WORTHY.—

On November 22nd Mr. John Roberts departed this life, aged sixty-eight. For fifty-one years he was an earnest Sunday-school teacher. During the past thirty-eight years he ably conducted the Senior Bible Class connected with John Street Chapel. From that responsible post he was only absent five times in nearly forty years, and on each occasion solely through illness. Such patient, prayerful labour was rewarded by 350 members of his class becoming communicants.

An Example worth Imitation.—The Princess Louise has executed enlarged drawings of shells from the River Shira to illustrate a lecture on geology which the Duke of Argyll gave the other evening at his castle on Lochfyne. About 500 of the people of Inverary and its neighbourhood were present.

Deaths from Starvation.—During the past year 235 coroner's inquests were held, the jury bringing in verdicts, "Died from want, cold, and exposure." Out of these, ninety-seven died of starvation in London alone. Some of them had seen better days, but unhappily they were too independent to apply to the parish official for relief.

Slop Work.—In spite of Thomas Hood's "Song of the Shirt," there are sempstresses still hemming sheets at eightpence halfpenny for ten. They pay for needles and thread three-halfpence, leaving the sum of sevenpence to meet the daily expenditure for food, firing, clothing, candle, and rent. There are also dealers in old clothes in Whitechapel, who, after buying, cleansing, and mending, sell boys' trousers at sixpence per pair, and jackets at the same price. The workers toil on until sight is injured and home broken up.

Epping Forest.—We are glad to record that by a decision of the Master of the Rolls many acres of this great lung of East London have been rescued from the encroachers, and that the forest is secured to the people in perpetuity. The question has been litigated since 1871 by the Corporation of the City of London. The importance of this forest to the health of London will be seen when it is stated that it consists of 5,000 acres, or a grand area of about eight square miles.

Drunkenness.—A recent return of the number of persons charged before magistrates in England and Wales in 1873 with being drunk, or drunk and disorderly — namely, 182,941—shows a remarkable increase on the number so charged in 1863, which was but 94,745. The increase has been chiefly in the last six of the intervening ten years. In 1867 the number was 100,357; in 1868 it was 111,465; in 1869, 122,310; in 1870, 131,870; in 1871, 142,343; in 1872, 151,084.

Scarlet Fever in London.—It is shown in the return of the Registrar-General that the deaths from scarlet fever in the three previous weeks had been 124, 97, and 92. The fatality of the disease showed a considerable increase in South London, no less than ten deaths from the disease being recorded in Kennington, and four both in St. James's, Bermondsey, and Norwood. Six deaths were also referred to scarlet fever both in Bow and Poplar. The Asylum District Hospitals contained 238 scarlet-fever patients on the 12th ult. against 243 in the previous week.

Notices of Meetings.

BOW.

Recently, a new Workmen's Institute was opened in Tredegar Road, North Bow. It is also to be used as a Ragged Sunday School. The immediate district in which the building has been erected does not appear to be so densely populated as others in the immediate neighbourhood, but it is almost exclusively occupied by working men; and as there is no other institution of a similar kind in the vicinity, it will no doubt be a valuable point of *réunion* in the coming long winter nights. The building cost about £2,400, and is quite unpretentious in appearance; but it has a capacious lecture-room, a reading-room supplied with daily and weekly papers, magazines, &c.; a refreshment-room, which will be open from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m., and other sources of recreation and amusement.

In order to make the opening ceremony more imposing, an exhibition of works of art by working men was held in the lecture-room. The exhibits were arranged on three tables, and the walls were thickly hung with paintings, drawings, &c. The articles were of the usual miscellaneous character, consisting of architectural models in cork, locomotives, drawings, stuffed birds, animals, ships, boats, cottages, fancy work, bronzes, carved ivory, rugs, &c., &c. There were three very curious specimens of the application of butterflies' wings to pictorial effect, and three of the conversion of ordinary brown flower-pots into something very tasteful by the incrustation upon them of spar-coloured bits of broken glass and other valueless materials. There was also a good display of plants and flowers, natural and artificial, and the whole was arranged in an order to produce the best effect.

LATIMER ROAD, HAMMERSMITH.

On November 17th a meeting was held in the hall in Latimer Road, Notting Hill, attended by a large number of laundresses, who have been reached by the City Mission.

The inhabitants of this district are mainly composed of laundresses who formerly made a public-house, called the "North Pole," their nightly resort. The local missionary has laboured assiduously for the spiritual benefit of this class, and his efforts have been so far successful that he has induced many to attend his ministrations at the hall and forsake their once much-frequented tavern. For this reason it is known as the "North Pole Mission," and from the appearance and behaviour of those who were present it was evident that they had gained much by the change they had been prevailed upon to make.

Mr. Clarke presided on the occasion, and delivered an address, as did also Dr. Dunbar and others.

Several hymns were sung during the evening, the women joining in heartily, and there was every indication that the mission will confer a great boon on the special class it is intended to reach.

LOWER PARK ROAD, PECKHAM.

The twenty-first Annual Meeting was held in the schoolroom on November 18th, Wm. Grantham, Esq., M.P., taking the chair.

From the report it appeared that the Day School was overflowing. The Night School for Men and Boys had made a great advance. The Girls' Night School had increased the number of its weekly winter meetings, thereby securing the advantage of Government inspection. A quarter of the time at each meeting of these Night Schools was devoted to Scriptural instruction. The attendance at the Sunday School had improved. The Dorcas Society had distributed 315 garments. Two ladies had kindly undertaken the duties of sewing mistresses. 1,004 meals of coffee and bread-and-butter had been given to the poor children, besides 804 meals of meat or soup. Mr. Hytche's report on his inspection says:—"The attainments as well as the conduct of the scholars are most creditable to your teachers." Her Majesty's Inspector's last report states: "The school is doing well. It has steadily improved for the last two years, and for regularity of attendance and intelligent teaching deserves a high character. The Infant Class is well taught. The Evening Schools have been well attended, and have passed very creditably." The children were examined in Scripture, spelling, mental arithmetic, and geography. Their tidy appearance and happy little faces were pleasant to look at, whilst the promptness and accuracy of their replies were truly surprising. One little toddler among the infants, however, caused some amusement when asked what good thing Pharaoh's daughter did for the boy Moses, by replying, "Sent him to school, sir."

The chairman then said that when Board Schools were first opened, many persons felt inclined to despair of continuing voluntary schools. He had, however, witnessed many instances where the two systems went on amicably side by side, as in this district, where Mr. Thorpe was president of the Christ Church Schools, and had also a seat on the local School Board. On the other hand, he had seen with regret many cases where the Board Schools had been worked in a way most inimical to the old denominational schools. He could readily imagine that the clergymen and the friends of the latter schools must have had a hard struggle to maintain them in the face of school rates. But he believed that a reaction had set in, and that subscriptions would be renewed. He was much pleased with what he had seen of the children's proficiency. If the school work continued to be carried on as heartily as heretofore, and if the supporters of the school would use their influence with the friends of religious education within and without the district, no doubt the debt would soon disappear, and the Lower Park Road School would be in finances, as in everything else, a pattern free school.

RAGGED NIGHT SCHOOLS.

Next to the schools held on the Lord's-day evening, no part of our operations is so important, or has been of so much social value, as the secular schools held on week nights. So much was their value felt by the pioneers of our movement, that, before Day Schools were even thought of, Night Schools were a prominent feature in the larger Ragged Schools.

The speedy success of our Night Schools is a notable fact in Ragged School history. For within five years after the formation of the Ragged School Union 4,824 of the roughest of the rough, including not a few of the vilest of the vile, were attracted into our sixty-seven Week Night Schools. The bright, cheerful fire, and in some few cases a cup of hot coffee, doubtless was the attraction to those who had passed the day in the streets, or whose only shelter at night from the rigour of an English winter was under a railway arch, or beneath the dark arches of the Adelphi. Scores of these poor children of neglect have we seen huddling together for warmth on doorsteps, or sleeping near the walls of sugar bakeries and other steam factories.

Nor has the fact that Board Schools are being built all round London led our friends to abandon this mode of battling with social vice and its giant shadow—misery. For they well know that the class for whom Night Schools were originally opened still exists, and hence that they are as much needed now as they were a quarter of a century ago.

From the thirtieth Report of the Ragged School Union it appears that ninety-two Ragged Schools hold secular Week Night Schools; and that in above thirty other buildings children are gathered for social or religious improvement on week nights. The combined attendance exceeds 6,000. Of these Night Schools fifty-one are restricted to rough lads.

Our Night Schools are taught by ninety-two paid teachers, some of whom show a remarkable gift for the management of "roughs." Thirty-three Night Schools are conducted solely by volunteers, and thirteen more are aided by these unpaid labourers. But did their number count by thousands instead of hundreds there would be ample scope for their services.

The importance of our Night Schools is based on the fact that they are instituted for the benefit of a class who, from social habits, *age*, dress, or daily occupations, cannot or will not attend any Day School. It follows that a properly constituted Ragged Night School includes a rougher type, that their language is less refined, and that they have a more unwashed aspect than we expect to find in an ordinary Day School. Were we then asked to define the distinction betwixt a Ragged Day and a Ragged Night School, we should say that, whilst the first is *preventive*, the other is *reformatory*.

Consequent on this distinction our night scholars are of a riper age than our day scholars. This difference in age will doubtless become more apparent now that the School Board insists on all children under thirteen attending some "efficient" Day School. But whatever the age of night scholars, we hesitate not to say that, unless the Night School mainly consists of juvenile "roughs" —those defiers of social laws and manners—it has failed in the great object for which it was established. For a Ragged Night School was never intended for boys in regular employment with fair wages—unless, indeed, they have been lifted out of the gutter by the school. "Keep to the gutter," says our noble leader; and unless our friends wish to retire from their moral crusade, so say we.

The class for whom our Night Schools are opened may be judged by the following extracts from the diary of one of the Central Society's School Agents, in which the "*outsiders*," who do their best to annoy the scholars, are described.

Grotto Passage.—Elder girls, or more definitely speaking, young thieves, struck most of the scholars as they entered, and rushed up-stairs whooping like maniacs. *Webber Row*.—The juvenile roughs of New Cut rushed up the ladder staircase which leads to the boys' room, or stood on the empty cottages outside, shouting and throwing stones at the boys as they entered. *Cottage Place*.—The boys and girls outside slapped the faces of the scholars as they entered: they plugged the keyhole with clay, plastered the windows with mud, and threw stones at the door. *Ernest Street*.—Shouts of laughter, varied by throwing peas and knocking down forms, caused several to be expelled. These, with others, molested all who entered, and rendered admittance difficult. Often visitors have been kept waiting outside *Giffin*

Street above ten minutes, because the master feared that the juvenile swearing roughs outside might rush in. So the girls who were waiting outside for the opening of the school at *Marigold Place* were chased by boys amid indescribable hootings.

These and similar facts prove that there are large masses of youth still *outside* Ragged School influences. This painful fact can be tested by all who will visit Lisson Grove and Westminster in the west, or New Cut and Kent Street in the south. For in those places groups of lads can always be seen, especially in the evening, "larking," gambling, and fighting. The bulk of these juvenile "roughs," we doubt not, could be attracted into Night Schools if teachers would volunteer their services. Painful, then, as it is to witness the above scenes, it is still more sad to find that so few Christian men and women try to socialise and save these waifs and strays.

So much for the *outside* of our Night Schools. That many of this unruly class are attracted inside our Night Schools we are glad to record. The class in attendance of course varies according to localities or school attractions. Thus, for example, the bulk of scholars belonging to *Exeter Buildings* and *Lower Park Road* are cockney Irish. *Lancaster Street* is periodically attended by juvenile roughs. *Old Woolwich Road* attracts many mud-larks. *John Street* and *St. James's Place* are attended by lads from the Potteries and Paddington dust-yards, who hope to become Shoeblacks. *Richmond Street* by many rough lads who are casual labourers in Portman Market. *Park Walk* attracts about fifty boys, many of them hawk-boys of the roughest character.

It is strange how the classes represented in the London Night Schools are reproduced in the provincial Ragged Schools. The last report of the Liverpool Ragged Union states that the twenty-four Night Schools include 2,336 scholars. The staple of the attendants is thus reported:—The Brunel Street School is attended by "rough boys and girls"—the latter, we need scarcely say, the worst of the two to manage, much less teach. Burlington Street School is found attractive to "wild boys." Nash Grove School is filled with "depraved boys and girls." Edge Hill School is attended by "cattle boys and beggars." Naylor Street School attracts nightly "the wildest and roughest lads." It will be seen from this sketch—and these are but typical of the remainder—that the Liverpool Ragged Schools dig deep into the

mire and gutter, out of which Ragged Schools, we need scarcely say, ought never to ascend.

Now that our Day Schools are lessening in number every quarter, through the action of the School Board, it becomes a question whether Night Schools ought not to resume their original prominence in our social plans—we say *social* advisedly, for though apparently merely secular, they are as really social in aim as our more avowed social operations.

This subject is now under the earnest consideration of the Committee of the Ragged School Union. They found on inquiry that in nearly sixty institutions no secular instruction is given on week nights. In many cases this doubtless arises less from want of zeal than from crippled funds, or from want of an adequate staff of workers. Some buildings, too, are only available on Sundays: this is especially the case with the buildings under the control of the School Board. But, doubtless, many buildings now unused on week nights, or only employed for the social or religious welfare of children or adults, might be used for secular instruction. Hence the Committee are "strenously endeavouring to stimulate and *extend* Night Schools for roughs of both sexes, and especially for those of thirteen years of age and upwards." With this view a special sub-committee was appointed at the usual monthly meeting of the Managing Committee in December last to consider the whole question, and to suggest plans to strengthen existing and for the opening of new Night Schools in needy districts. As one means they have, through the School Agents, communicated with the managers of Night Schools which are ill attended, and of schools which are not opened on week nights for secular instruction.

The next step was to call a "Conference on the revival of Night Schools," on January 21st ult. The persons invited were those from schools (1st) where a desire exists to do this work, and (2nd) where there was a willingness to consider the subject.

The social evils glanced at in this paper are so glaring as scarcely to warrant further comment. Unless we are prepared to retire from this conflict, and that after thirty years' moral warfare, on we *must* go in this crusade until the victory, now within our grasp, is won. For a solemn question presses on all who know the number of depraved youth of both sexes still

outside all religious influence: Is it not possible to attract very many into Night Schools if Christian men and women would proffer their services? Surely if any moral harvest is ripe for the sickle this one is pre-eminently so. We trust, then, that in response to this plea many will be led to contribute either money or time, and so answer the *mute* appeal of these poor neglected ones—"Come over and help us!"

DUBLIN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THERE are five Ragged Schools in Dublin all under the supervision of the agents of that admirable society, the "Irish Church Missions." They are attended every Lord's day by about 1,200 persons of all ages, from greybeards to infants—most of whom, we are glad to say, have been won from that curse of Ireland, Popery. Between 900 and 1,600 of these waifs and strays are collected in the connected Day and Night Schools. In addition, in various Homes 400 children are gathered under true Christian superintendence.

An English visitor thus describes what he witnessed in these Ragged Schools—institutions which may be well regarded as the hope of Ireland:—

"One day I called at the mission house in Townsend Street with a letter of introduction to Miss English, the lady superintendent—a lady by birth and bearing, with a large heart and wide sympathies, quick perceptions, and earnest devotion to the work that she has chosen for her own. All this made itself felt at once, and my involuntary reflection was, 'There must be reality in the work which has enlisted such a sympathiser in its interests.' We seemed in two minutes to have been acquainted ten years.

We did not waste time over preliminaries; I had but an hour or two to devote to seeing whatever she could show me, and I did not then know whether I might have another opportunity. 'A little glimpse of as many of the schools as there is time for, then,' said Miss E—. 'You want a bird's-eye view of the whole, and you can grasp the thing quickly, I see. The Ragged Boys' School is held here under this roof, so first we will go to that; it is a training school, too, for the youths of our normal school, who, as well as our readers and masters, live and board in the house; but it is nearly three o'clock, and then the schools will all be out, so we must make haste.' The concluding part of this sentence was spoken as we hastened along a corridor which brought us to the door of a large airy hall, whence

a great buzz of sound proceeded. It ceased as we entered, and Miss E— introduced me to the intelligent master, begging him to put the boys through a 'five minutes' examination' on as many subjects as possible, for my behoof. He smiled. 'Oh, it will be enough,' said Miss E—, in reply to his look. 'This lady is accustomed to see a great deal, and a couple of questions on each subject will give her a notion of how they answer.'

We next looked into the Infant School, and then ran across to the Luke Street Girls' School, and thence to the Boys' Home, in Lurgan Street. The Ragged Boys' Home it is called; ragged indeed the boys were when they came to it first, but now they are neat and comfortable, homely though their clothing is.

It was nearly dinner-time. In Ireland, school children have their dinner at three, and not at twelve, as with us. The boys were collected in the large class-room, chattering and amusing themselves as they pleased. When we entered with the matron, with whom they seemed on the very best of terms, they gave us a frank and smiling greeting; and soon all their pets were being exhibited. A cage of canary birds was placed on the table before us, and a fine pussy was called to be admired, and their hearts were won when we took into our arms and fondled a tiny tame leveret. The taste for pets is a humanising one, and the kind matron wisely gives it licence. The house was beautifully clean; the boys do all the work themselves. Early in the morning they scrub the stairs and rooms, clean the knives, wash the cups and dishes, &c. Then at half-past nine they go to the central Mission School, where we first saw them; at three they return for dinner. Then they take a walk, or if it be Saturday afternoon you might see them sitting round the school-room fire, patching their clothes, darning their stockings, sewing buttons on their clean shirts, or making slippers out of pieces of carpet, while one kind lady visitor arranges the work, and another reads aloud to the delight of all. It is a difficult task to keep all the stray elbows and knees within bounds, and there is very little money to spare to buy new clothes.

The whole arrangements of the Home have to be carried out on the smallest possible allowance. Still, a happier, more contented-looking set of boys could scarcely be seen. How different from what they once were!—hungry, ignorant, ragged, desolate."

As is the case with all the Irish Ragged Schools, the children of the Dublin Schools are remarkable for their knowledge of Scripture. This will be seen from the following sketch of an extempore Bible examination of the Townsend Street Ragged School by that excellent man, the Rev. Dr. Tyng, of New York. He says that in this

school the boys sat round him on their benches, most of them barefoot, some of them bare up to their knees, and all of them very scantily clothed. He said, "I have come from New York; do you know where that is?" "Oh, yes," said one; "I have got a cousin there across the sea." He said, "I want to go back to New York; tell me how I am to get there." "Your honour must go down to the quay, and get a ship, and go on board of her." He said, "I don't like that way of going to New York. I am determined that I will try to swim there." "Swim there!" said a boy; "then you'll never get there." He said, "I can swim more than a mile." "But what is a mile to 3,000? You'll be starved before you get there," was the reply. "Then I am determined I will walk on the bottom, and get there that way." "You'd never do it; you would be smothered before the day was over." "Then, if I cannot do that, I will build a bridge." Half a dozen exclaimed at once, "You haven't the first stone to build it on." He asked, "Tell me how I am to go to heaven?" "'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,'" said a dozen at least, "'and thou shalt be saved.'" He said, "I don't like that way. I am determined to go by the goodness of my own works." They replied, "'If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.'" "But," he said, "I am going to do more and better works than Abraham did." "Well, then," said a boy, "'By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight,' and sure your honour is flesh." So the thing went round, and for more than half an hour he was battling with these little fellows, and they beat him at every step. At last he said, "What must I do to go to heaven?" Said a boy—a little ragged fellow, with his knees out of his breeches—"Your honour must go on board the Lord Jesus Christ, and stick to him." He had given that answer to more than a hundred—nay, to a thousand different persons, and in different places, to this day; and he believed it was inspiration that brought forth such a reply. He asked, "What is the difference between going to New York in a ship, and going to heaven on board the Lord Jesus Christ?" A little fellow said, "If you go on board a ship to go to New York, you may never get there; but, if you go on board the Lord Jesus Christ to get to heaven, you are sure to get there." "Tell me why?" "If you go on board a ship, the ship may become a wreck; but the Lord Jesus can never be a wreck."

LONDON DENS, AND HOW TO IMPROVE THEM.

A WRITER in the *Christian World* gives the following sketch of the dens—we cannot call them houses—in which too many of the poor *live* in London, and also refers to some of the plans adopted to put a better class of rooms within their limited resources. He says "that while well-to-do people in this country decorate and brighten their hearths and homes, it is well to be reminded of those less fortunate ones, who, often from no fault of their own, are compelled to live in foul dens, where fever and death ever lurk, and where decency and virtue are unknown. Overcrowding is always an evil of large cities, but it is the great crying evil of the London of to-day, where the railways have taken possession of what were once long streets of workmen's houses, and where in other quarters we see the working man turned out to make room for the erection of new streets lined with magnificent and costly offices. Nor can it be overlooked that medical men see in it an increase of fever and premature mortality, which makes itself present to the parochial mind in the increased pressure of rates and taxes. The clergy see how such a state of things is utterly destructive of decent life and godly aim, and the sooner the ministers of all religious communions turn their attention to the matter, the better chance will they have of effectually preaching the Gospel to the poor.

As regards the lowest strata of London life, it is often the first requisite to godliness. In the last volume by the author of "Friends in Council" we have an account of a decent country girl brought up to live in the filthy surroundings of a London court. At first she struggled bravely to be tidy and respectable, but day by day her task became more difficult, and at length she hopelessly succumbed. First the place of worship is neglected, then the ginshop is resorted to, and then we have pauperism, and vice, and crime, and there is no alternative.

City improvements imply social deterioration. It is only the better-paid workmen who can manage to live in Sir Sydney Waterlow's beautiful blocks of buildings, or on the Shaftesbury estate, or travel by the workmen's trains—and there are few of them, and mostly inconvenient—backwards and forwards. The greater number have to exist as best they can, and bad indeed is that best. The other evening Lord Aberdeen referred to a case which had come under his own knowledge of a room which had been let out to five families, one in each corner and one in the middle. Could Swift have imagined amongst his Yahoos anything more repulsive, more degrading and degraded, more utterly destructive of all right feeling? As long as this state of things exists the preacher will preach in vain.

Under these circumstances I was glad to be present at the anniversary meeting of the Model Houses Association for improving the Dwellings of the Industrial Poor, and for the Diffusion of Sanitary Knowledge, held at the Quebec Institute, Portman Square, on Friday night, the Earl of Aberdeen in the chair. The aim of the society is to labour amongst the residuum, who do not live in model dwellings because they cannot afford to do so. It seeks to attain its objects by disseminating amongst the poor, in a cheap and compendious form, a rudimentary knowledge of the laws of health, by promoting the employment of useful inventions, so as to induce them to be clean in their habits, and by providing plans to house-owners, showing how the houses, courts, and alleys can be improved at small expense. In short, the association seeks to discharge a double duty—to get rid of a dangerous nuisance and to make the houses fit to live in. The council ask the clergy of all denominations to occasionally bring before their congregations the merits and important objects of the association. It would be Christ-like if they did. The Master while on earth went about doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and disease, and a foul and overcrowded dwelling is the source of contagion, physical and moral, which spreads far and near."

At the meeting to which we refer, it is needless to observe, resolutions in favour of the objects of the association were unanimously carried, although one of them went so far as to affirm "that adequate remedies should be demanded from Government for the reduction of the frightful mortality arising from preventible diseases, which not only sweep away multitudes of constitutionally weak men and women, but leave still vaster numbers to linger on with health shattered, and insufficient for either the duties or enjoyments of life." Another resolution which also deserves to be recorded, was to the effect that ladies of the middle and upper classes should be encouraged to join federated local associations affiliated with the Central Model. Houses Association, and having for their object the improvement of the dwellings of the industrial poor, and instruction in such laws of health as can only be heartily and consistently carried out through the appreciative co-operation of women in every rank of society. The principal speech of the night was that of Sir Thomas Chambers, M.P., who referred at great length to the difficulties, moral and physical, of such a population as we had in London, as perfectly appalling, and who considered the objects aimed at by the association as amongst the most important means for the elevation of the working classes. He contended that the poor had been deprived of accommodation in order that railways might be brought into the City, and that new streets might be made, and he contended that if they had better houses they would drink less gin.

In Memoriam.

MRS. READE.

Mrs. Reade, of Hastings, is a name that has, with singular frequency, been brought under the eye of the readers of this magazine. For many years the name has appeared both in the list of acknowledgments of parcels, and in the list of money received in each issue of the periodical. In the first week of each month, with singular regularity, came a brown paper parcel by railway, containing a dozen or more garments for children, the result of Mrs. Reade's industry and liberality of the preceding month, and in it was invariably a letter of instruction with the amount of money she herself gave, and any other sums in the meantime collected for the Ragged School Union. Hence the twofold monthly acknowledgments referred to. The first of her contributions came to hand in January, 1849, from which time she has taken a deep interest in the varied efforts of the parent Society and schools affiliated with it. On receiving the last December number of the Magazine, she was so pleased with the lines on the title-page that she expressed a wish to have them separately printed for private distribution, which wish was immediately acceded to.

Her last communication to us was as follows:—

"Hastings, Dec. 2nd, 1874.

The contributions this last month of a quickly-fading year being rather satisfactory, I hasten to send them to you, my very dear sir, together with my accustomed offering of humble apparel, and please to enter upon your list of friends, as below—

Mrs. Shaddock	£1	1	0
The Misses Loft	1	0	0
Mrs. Reade	0	10	0
To Christmas Dinner—			
Mrs. Reade	0	10	0
Miss Stringer	0	2	6
	£3	3	6

And, as I shall not have occasion to write again until, please God, we enter once more on another stated period of time, let me express to you my hope that every blessing of Christmastide may wait on your-

self and family; and the ensuing year may be made prosperous to us all in the best sense of the phrase! In the sincere, prayerful desire of which, I once again remain, as usual, your thankful, faithful

Friend in the Lord,

Hester C. Reade."

In the first week in January, 1875, was expected the usual monthly parcel with the direction of the well-known handwriting. It did not come, but early in the month was received a parcel of clothing apparently from Hastings, but nothing inside to indicate the donor, the handwriting was not known, and it was entered as Anonymous. On January 7th a letter was received from Bath explaining all, and stating: "You will regret to hear of the death, on the 19th ultimo, of Mrs. Reade, whose earnest practical interest in the Ragged Schools had been so long continued. She died, aged 88, in that perfect peace which her Christian life had promised. The parcel in question contained what she had prepared for another contribution to them."

Thus has passed away another of those active and generous friends who worked long and well to ameliorate the condition of the very poor. The Society and the poor have indeed lost a good friend in the death of Mrs. Reade, but their loss is her gain. Of her, in the expressive words of Mrs. Barbauld, it may be said—

"Life's labour done, as sinks the day,
Night from its load the spirit flies;
While heaven and earth combine to say,
How blest the righteous when she dies."

CHILDREN'S EVANGELISTIC BANDS.

The Rev. E. P. Hammond's labours in this country in 1867 have not been without abiding results. The "Children's Christian Band," established by Mr. Tyler in 1870, in connection with the Surrey Chapel Children's Services; the "Young Christian's Association," originated by Mr. Wigner; the "Christian Instruction Class," which owes so much to the earnest labours of Mr. Spiers; Dr. Barnardo's "Mutual Association for Believing Lads," and "Christian Girls' Association;" and lastly the "Christian Evangelistic Band," which has now been in operation about four months,—are all outcomes of the interest which was then evoked in Christian minds in favour of systematic efforts which should be more fruitful in leading the young to decide for Christ than has been in the past the ordinary Sunday School organisation.

"The Sunday School," says Mr. T. B. Bishop, the hon. sec. of

the "Children's Special Service Mission," in one of the earnest little tracts which he has put forth on the subject, "often seems to lead the scholars to a certain point, and no further. They get a certain amount of Bible knowledge, a certain taste for religious exercises, and perhaps a certain impression made upon their minds, but that is all." In the school, the thoughtless and the earnest children are each subjected to the same routine, if indeed the troublesome children do not monopolise a larger share of the teacher's attention, with a view to the maintenance of order. For a teacher to leave the rest of the class in order to give his whole thoughts to the shrinking questionings of one little scholar whose heart has been more than ordinarily solemnised in regard to Divine things, is necessarily impracticable. To meet this difficulty it has been found desirable to supplement the Sunday School engagements by the Conversational Class, which is intended to draw together from the mass of scholars the most thoughtful; while the really earnest children are invited to remain for the "after meeting," at which they are individually addressed by a number of experienced Christians, and encouraged, if their hearts are moved to make a profession of Christ, to band together for mutual edification—a number not exceeding five being given into the special care of some elder Christian for the purpose of being individually watched over. Any novel mode of working will be sure to excite objections, and it has been suggested that the effect of such efforts may be to unduly influence for the moment unformed minds and lead to scandal upon the Christian profession. Mr. Bishop has observed, "It is impossible to remove all at once these misconceptions as to our work; but what we can do is, by judicious dealing to take care that there shall be no foundation for them."

Mr. Tyler, last January, made personal inquiries about the first one hundred children admitted into the Christian Band three years before, and found that 15 had joined the church, most of them as teachers; 38 were still in attendance at the children's service, and consistent; 1 was in attendance, but unsatisfactory; 17 belonged to other denominations, and were not regularly visited by Mr. Tyler, but many were known by him to be consistent; 25 had removed to a distance; and four had died holding fast their profession. Mr. Bishop gives this as the result of his observations: "I have seen that those dear children who are led to the Saviour very young generally prove the most steady and consistent as they grow up"—a result which is certainly in accordance with Scripture promise, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." In the order adopted at the Conversational Classes, a strict system of routine is especially avoided. "While everything is

done," says Mr. Bishop, "to ensure reverence and solemnity, there is at the same time an air of freedom and joyousness about them which is very attractive to the children. We strive to make it felt that religion is a happy thing, and to associate it in the children's minds with all that is bright, and joyous, and gladsome. And they feel at home; they feel that the services are their services; and we have abundant testimony that they thoroughly appreciate and love them." Week-evening services and home visits furnish further bonds of sympathy between the young professors and their more matured Christian friends.

One of these valuable agencies is conducted in Bridge Street Ragged School, Greenwich. As other schools may be led to embrace this novel plan to win the young for Jesus, we give the following outline of the proceedings which we have witnessed there and elsewhere with much pleasure.

The school opened at six o'clock, when the children began to arrive. To keep them quiet and orderly, hymns were sung until half-past six o'clock, when the service was commenced by singing a hymn. A short extempore prayer followed, another hymn was sung, and then a few verses of Scripture were read and explained, followed by another prayer. A hymn was then sung, and an address of about twenty minutes was given, when another hymn was sung, and prayer offered, which closed the first meeting, which lasted an hour.

The earnest and anxious children were invited to remain to what is called the "Conversational Meeting," and during the dismissal of the other children and the arranging of the forms and desks, two or three hymns were sung. The children were formed into classes. A few words spoken by the superintendent impressed upon the children the solemnity of the meeting, and also encouraged them to decide for Jesus. A short prayer followed, and then the teachers and friends strove to set Christ before the children as a present Saviour, and spoke with them separately. This was easily managed by calling them one by one a little distance out of the class. This is indeed a blessed opportunity for the teachers of the Sunday School to get at their children, and thus have quiet individual conversation and prayer for the Holy Spirit, so necessary in leading them to that Saviour who has said "Suffer little children to come unto me."

[Of such private *individual* speaking we cannot think too highly, more especially as in many cases it has led to immediate decision for Christ.]

A SUNDAY MORNING AT GRAY'S YARD RAGGED SCHOOL.

On New Year's Sunday the Annual Breakfast was given at the above-named institution to 874 of the poorest of the poor, consisting of tramps, people who live in lodging-houses or who have no home at all, frequenters of the casual wards, and others. Most of them appeared unmistakably hungry, and it is almost needless to say that the four rooms at the disposal of the committee were speedily filled, many, profiting perhaps by past experience, having waited upwards of an hour before the doors were opened. There were 187 women and children present, and they sufficed to fill a room by themselves. These poor creatures were once more in their weary lives cheered with a good meal and a few kindly words. On entering each one had two large slices of bread and butter, more than an inch thick, given to him, and a mug of coffee. Mr. F. A. Bevan presided.

After a hymn had been sung, prayer was offered and Gospel addresses delivered, which were listened to with the greatest attention.

Mr. G. Hanbury based his remarks upon the text, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." He said he was glad to see them all so comfortable, and with smiling faces. Because they were poor they must not imagine they were beneath the notice of others. In the Bible they read that the blessed Saviour thought much of the poor, and did a great deal for them, and it was the poor who received the Gospel gladly. The Chairman, Mr. Denham Smith, and the Rev. Canon Wright, gave some earnest addresses, and several ladies addressed the women in the room set apart for them. The services were carried on in the various rooms at the same time, so that in one room they might be heard singing; in another, prayer was being offered, while in another an earnest address was being delivered. There was also a fifth party in the yard, who having had the preliminary portion of their meal, were singing as lustily as the others inside, and listening reverently to the addresses and prayers. At the close, each man, woman, and child was given a bag containing a meat pie weighing about three-quarters of a pound, and a large currant bun, with an additional supply of coffee. While they were partaking of this the visitors walked round the rooms and asked several questions as to their condition and circumstances. One fine-looking man said he had been in the army, and in answer to Sir Robert Carden, who asked why he had not remained in the army, he said he had been invalided, but had no pension. A sharp-looking youth told Sir Robert he should like to go to sea, and the worthy alderman said that any of those

present who were anxious to go to sea and were under seventeen years of age might go to the Marine Society in Bishopsgate Street, and use his name, and if they were suitable lads a ship would be found for them, and they would have a new suit of clothes, and he would guarantee that they would be well looked after. Some of the youths expressed their determination to follow this course. After the meal had been disposed of, and the Doxology sung, a cloth-bound portion of Holy Scripture, the annual gift of Mr. John Morley, was presented to each person on leaving. The expense of the breakfast was about £40, and it was met by special contribution.

The Hon. Secretary on New Year's Sunday was assisted by at least forty helpers, who voluntarily and gladly rendered their services, besides those ladies and gentlemen who attended and delivered addresses. Where so much self-denial is displayed success must follow, but it is to be hoped that the committee will not be allowed to suffer under a burden of debt, and that those Christian people who have the pecuniary means, although not the time or opportunity to personally attend, will be jealous to perform their share of this important work, by at once giving of their substance towards its support.

The usual Sunday-morning operations of this Ragged School are as follows:—A Bible Reading, held at ten o'clock, is attended by about 200. This meeting forms a good preparation for the Sunday Morning Service, at eleven o'clock, which during the winter is attended by between 400 and 500. In addition there is a School and a Children's Church, in which a simple service is held at half-past ten.

SINGING FOR JESUS.

One of the most popular hymns in Ragged Schools is entitled, "I will sing for Jesus." The following incident will show how the Spirit of God sometimes vouchsafes to bless such singing; and so it may serve to encourage those who have adopted that path of Christian labour:—

"I'll tell you what, I heard singin' to-night that made me wish I was in heaven, or good enough to go there," said old Austin Vernon to his wife, as entering his cottage he sat down to his evening meal.

"Where did you hear it?" she asked.

"At our neighbour's up yonder. They must feel something I don't know about, or they couldn't sing *so*."

"When they first came here," said the wife, "I thought they

were proud and stiff; but they are real good neighbours, and I heard after they were good church folks too."

"Well," said he, "I mean to go to church to-morrow, and see if I can't hear some singin' like that."

The singer knew that her neighbours were ignorant, rough, and unbelieving, nearing the decline of life, and unwilling to be approached on the subject of religion. The wife especially was so nearly a heathen that she would never enter a church, never allow the visit of a minister, nor listen to the reading of God's word, or even to the singing of a hymn. The man was a poor but honest day-labourer, who had ruined his worldly affairs by indulgence in strong drink, but had been lifted out of that pit, and had been sober for many years. Still, he was a rough swearing man, and his heart unsoftened by any religious influence.

One summer evening, as the sun was going down, the lady seated herself at the window, and involuntarily tuned her voice to Mrs. Hemans' sweet hymn, "Come to the sunset tree." She felt the spirit of the heavenly words, and sang with fervour. When near the close of the hymn, she cast her eyes to the field where her neighbour was at work, and saw that he was listening intently. Instantly the thought flashed into her mind, "Oh, if I could raise that poor man to think of heaven!" She closed her refrain, and then commenced, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," singing it "with the spirit and the understanding also." And as she sang the old man listened, almost spell-bound. "I will sing God's praises whenever he can hear me and perhaps he may be led to praise the Lord himself," was her mental resolve.

The next Lord's-day the old man was at church. This cheered the lady, and she said, "I will sing whenever he comes." Ere another week was closed he was at work again. This time she sang—

> "Just as I am, without one plea,
> But that Thy blood was shed for me."

Slowly, distinctly she sang, that he might take in the full meaning of the words, and feeling their sweet pathos in her inmost soul, she sang the hymn. The listener shook his head, and rubbed his hand quickly over his eyes. The next Lord's-day evening he was among the praying people of God, earnestly inquiring for the way of salvation. The singer had sown seed, and earnestly asked the Lord to make him one of his own children.

Seeking further to do good, the lady encouraged his poor ignorant wife in many friendly ways, and one day invited her into the parlour to hear her piano. She had never seen or heard such an instrument,

and was thunderstruck. The lady called her daughters to her side, and all joined in singing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," to the old tune, "Coronation."

"Do you like that?" said the lady.

"Oh, it's nice. I b'l'eve I heered that tune somewhere when I was a girl, but I've forgot."

"Probably you heard it at church. It is often sung there. We cannot sing the praises of Jesus too often, for he came to save us poor sinners." Then they all sang, "Come, humble sinner, in whose breast," &c. The woman rose and said she must go, and was invited "to come again." "Oh, I'll come often if I can hear you sing."

"Mother, you take a strange way to win souls; do you think you will succeed?"

"Why not, my daughter? Has not God commanded that *whatsoever* we do, should be done to his glory? And if he has given us voices to sing, should we not use them in his service? There are many in Ragged Schools or Ragged Churches that will listen to a hymn that will not hear a word from the Bible. Let us then be "wise to win souls!"

Hints for Teachers.

A STAFF OF SUPERNUMERARIES.

THE Rev. D. Alexander, of Plaistow, in his Sunday School Union Prize Essay, gives the following valuable practical suggestion on organising a supernumerary band of teachers. This is such a pressing want in most Ragged Schools that we cannot hesitate to recommend its general adoption:—

"There are many in our churches and congregations prevented by force of circumstances from becoming regular teachers, who would yet be glad to take a class occasionally. An afternoon every Sabbath day could not be given, but an afternoon now and then to supply the place of an absent teacher, would be cheerfully accorded.

The assistance, so given, might not be equal to that of a regular workman, but it would be better than none, and might often lead to more constant help. Breaks of this kind are constantly occurring, the school is thrown into confusion, order and method are destroyed, and the loss to the classes—and, indeed, to the school generally—is immense. Nothing is more usual than to find in a school of any size, on a Sunday afternoon, *two* or *three* classes entirely without teachers, standing or walking about like '*Lambs* without a shepherd,' until rescued by the superintendent, and broken up into fragments for admixture with other classes. The lesson there is different from what they have prepared, the teacher is strange, the class-mates are strange, and the whole benefit

of the school for that day, to those children, is destroyed.

Every army has a '*reserve*' force, and why not the army of the Sunday School? Every minister, when obliged to be absent from his pulpit on a Sabbath day, provides a substitute — no congregation of adults is ever left without Christian instruction. Why, then, should the ministers of the children act differently, and their instruction be considered of so much less importance? Can there be such a difference between the value of a child's soul and that of a grown person? A very little care and trouble would enable every teacher to provide a regular substitute, who would take his or her class on occasion of absence. Such a promise having been received, the name should be entered upon the superintendent's list of supernumeraries, and the teacher held responsible for giving due notice to his substitute when intending to be absent. Surely there is latent power enough in every church for such occasional services, and here is a means of turning it to account. It will thus be employed for Christ, the regular teaching of the children proceed without interruption, and diffidence being removed by practice, many would move from the 'militia of the Sunday school' to its 'standing army.'

Nor can the importance of having these breaks prevented be over-estimated. Small as they may seem, they are fraught with great consequences. Order and discipline are destroyed, a class is left to be torn into shreds and disorganised, or allowed to amuse itself for an hour as best it may—in some cases it has had to be disbanded. The young mind, ever active, and ever seeking ways of expressing its activity, soon converts this liberty into licence. It becomes restless, inattentive, and meddlesome, and no wonder if the teacher finds on the following Sunday that his class is beyond his control. Unruly classes are often the result of irregular teachers. Nor is this all, or the worst effect of such absence. Confidence between teacher and scholar is destroyed, and with lack of such confidence all hope of good results is lost. It is in the feeling that his teacher earnestly desires his good that moral power over the scholar is gained; but can the scholar think that teacher in earnest who leaves him to shift for himself every fourth or fifth Sunday, who asks him to learn hymns for a certain day, and is then not present to hear them, and to get up lessons for which he is not intending to inquire? Children are quick to perceive such inconsistency, and its reaction on themselves is full of untold injury. Earnestness and attention are driven out of them because seen to be absent in their leader and guide. They come and go to school as they please, with this mental reserve, 'Do not even our teachers the same?'

To a great extent, at least, all this would be prevented by the formation of a reserve 'corps.' The regular lesson might be taught, appointed hymns or passages repeated, and in the main the work go on undisturbed. The children would perceive their teacher's care in thus providing for them, and, at the same time, increase of interest and power be secured from the church."

IN THE CLASS.

From letters received from several Sunday Ragged School teachers we

select the following practical hints as to what teachers ought to be when at the head of their classes.

Losing Temper.—"Nothing seems to please my class so much as when they succeed in making me *lose my temper*. I must confess I have done so more than once; but when it has occurred all useful teaching is over for that evening. But when I have appealed to their better feelings, and shown the pain it has occasioned me, I have heard their well-known 'All right teacher, we won't do it again,' and as a rule they keep their word."

Earnestness.—"Whatever want of attention may be noticed in some of the classes it is obvious that these boys and girls are conscious when the teacher is in *earnest*, and that he has put himself to trouble in order to benefit the class. And this produces a feeling of respect on the part of the boy, which is not only valuable in the class, but out of it also, for his employers in the week will reap the good effected by the beneficial restraint of the Bible Class. As a rule, the children will listen when the teacher is well-prepared with a lesson, and will eagerly listen to an interesting Biblical narrative."

Shaking Hands.—"If it is possible to be in my class I never miss; and I believe many souls have, during the year, found peace in believing at these meetings. I always *shake hands* when we part, and to each make special inquiries as to the state of their souls."

Prepared Lessons.—"Nothing is more striking than to feel a supernatural support stealing over the spirit when one has given an hour's earnest teaching, apparently without a single listening ear; and not only so, but the most silly trifling going on between one and another, till it seems almost wicked to read with them God's Word! And yet one is constrained to go on. Some simple word is spoken; a chord is tunefully struck; attention is instantly riveted; each head is bent eagerly, listening to the truth, and the call for book-gathering brings out a hearty chorus of regrets. I sometimes ask myself if this sad restlessness, so common to both sexes, in this class of children, is not in some measure occasioned by the want of a *well-chosen* and *well-thought-out lesson* on the part of the teacher? Some persons think, because they are familiar with the Bible and its devotional truths, it is very easy to teach such children. One half-hour's experience would scatter such a thought; and we shall find the successful teacher is the well-prepared teacher—ready to catch the spirit exhibited at the moment, and turn it into some instructive lesson."

Praying for Help.—"I sometimes ask myself the question, Have I been teaching this evening, or has God been teaching through me? and I fear there has been frequently more of the man than the Spirit. At other times, when the restlessness of some, the ignorance of others, the mixture of ages and capacities in the same class, has made teaching almost impossible, the strong cry has gone up from within for help, which has never been unanswered; and thus supported by the Saviour I am not dismayed by conduct or by numbers."

Children's Page.

DAILY BREAD.

A TRUE STORY.

I KNEW a widow, very poor,
Who four small children had;
The oldest was but six years old,
A quiet, thoughtful lad.

He went unto a Ragged School,
And there was taught to pray,
In Jesu's name, that every want
Might be supplied each day.

O very hard the widow toiled
To feed her children four;
For still she had an honest mind,
Though she was very poor.

She left her home betimes to work,
That so they might be fed;
And glad she was, when she could buy
A three penny worth of bread;

For this was all these children had,
From day to day, to eat;
Water they drank, and bread they got,
But never tasted meat.

One day the snow was falling fast,
And piercing was the air,
I thought that I would go and see
How these poor children were.

Ere long I reached their cheerless home;
'Twas searched by every breeze:
On going in, the eldest boy
I saw upon his knees.

I stood and listened to the boy,
Who never raised his head;
But yet went on in prayer, "Give us
This day our daily bread."

I waited till the child had done,
Still listening as he prayed;
And, when he rose, I asked him why
The Lord's Prayer he had said.

His answer was, "This morning, sir,
When mother went away;
She cried, because she had no bread
For us to eat to-day;

"She said we children soon must starve,
Since father now was dead;
But soon I told her not to cry,
For I would get some bread.

"'Our father,' sir, the prayer begins—
Which made me think that He,
Since we had got no father here,
Would now Our Father be.

"And then, you know, the prayer asks God
To give us bread *this* day;
So, in the corner then I went,
And knelt me down to pray."

I quickly left that wretched room,
And went with willing feet,
And very soon came back again,
With food enough to eat.

"I thought God heard me," said the boy,
I answered with a nod;
I could not speak, but much I thought,
Of that boy's faith in God.

Ragged School Union.

THE January meetings of the Committees were held on the 4th, 5th, and 8th of the month. The receipts of the month of December were £293 15s. 10d., and the payments £240 17s. 11d. The quarterly grants in aid of salaries of teachers in twenty schools amounted to £104 18s. 4d, the other payments to £204 0s. 6d.

For several years it has been the practice of the Committee to spend the first hour of the first meeting in the new year in special prayer, and the same was continued this year. A grant of £10 was voted to Cranbrook Street Evening and Sunday School. A grant of £10 was voted to the school at Shadwell Railway Station towards repairs and cleaning. A grant of £40 voted to the school in Castle Street towards the year's current expenses. A grant of £10 voted to Well Street School, Hackney, on condition that Evening Schools be conducted in addition to present operations. The annual grant to Perkins' Rents School towards teachers' salaries increased from £20 to £27 per year. A grant of £30 formerly voted to Nichol Street School was ordered to be paid. A grant of £8 for school materials voted to Dove Row School. A special grant of £20 voted towards the current expenses of Morton Road School for 1874. A grant of £30 formerly voted on certain conditions to Sermon Lane Schools was ordered for payment, as the conditions have been complied with. A letter was read from Mr. Hytche stating that he has for two months been unwell, and needed prolonged rest, and with a view to be able to command that rest, resigned his position in connection with the Society. The Committee sympathised with him, and deferred receiving the resignation for three months, and voted leave of absence to him for that time.

Applications for aid are under consideration, but not settled, from schools in New Tothill Street, Castle Street, Linton Place, Parker Street, and Brentford.

Arrangements were made for holding a conference on January 21 with some of the friends of local schools, with a view to the extending of Night Schools for the benefit of boys and girls of thirteen years of age and upwards.

Facts and Scraps.

BRITANNIA ROW, ISLINGTON.—We are glad to report that this and the sister Ragged School in Rufford's Buildings are much aided by the students of the Church Missionary College. They not only preach but teach.

GREAT QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S

INN.—On January 5th the children connected with the National Refuges for the Homeless and Destitute, and the training-ships *Chichester* and *Arethusa*, assembled at the Refuge to receive their New Year's dinner. About 700 children partook of the substantial fare provided. Captain Sir George Biddlecombe, R.N., the chairman, then distributed the prizes, consisting of silver watches, medals, workboxes, books, &c., the recipients being boys and girls who had kept their situations for a certain time, ranging from one to five years, and others at present in the institutions. Edward Cotter, one of the three survivors of the *Cospatrick*, who is a *Chichester* boy, was unable to be present to receive the medal which had been provided for him.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.—The superintendent thus describes some of his scholars. There are many poor children growing up with bodies impoverished, with cares upon young hearts greater than used to be borne by men. Children make their bed upon cabbage leaves in the market-place, because a drunken father turns them out of home on a winter's night. A child aged six years, not knowing where to obtain food, because his father is constantly in a state of intoxication.

PERKINS' RENTS, WESTMINSTER.—On the occasion of the recent marriage of Lord Grosvenor, two plum puddings were conspicuous, each surmounted by a tiny flag, with the inscription, "From the One Tun," the handiwork of the young members of the "cooking class" at that well-known school, and forwarded to the Marchioness of Westminster by Mrs. Barker-Harrison. Her ladyship, in acknowledging the offering, said:—"I received a very nice letter from thirteen of the little makers, and shall be so much obliged to you if you will thank them for me, and tell them how nice the puddings looked, and how good they proved to be!"

THE QUEEN'S CLOTHING CLUB.—Her Majesty's New Year's gifts, consisting of beef and coals, were presented to the poor of New Windsor, Holy Trinity, and Clewer, in the riding-school of Windsor Castle, Jan. 1. From the accouts of then Queen's Club it appears that for the year just closing there have been 318 first-class depositors, each paying 6d. weekly for 40 weeks; 166 second-class, 4d. each for 45 weeks; and 113 third-class, contributing 3d. a week for 48 weeks. Altogether there are 599 depositors, who have paid in £487 14s., and her Majesty annually gives £100 towards the fund. The depositors purchase clothing with their savings for winter use.

A NOBLE GIVER.—The *John Bull* says that a rural dean in the diocese of Rochester vouches for the substantial accuracy of the following statement:—An old Mr. Attwood died recently near Cheshunt. He was about eighty years old, and a widower; rich, but living very quietly. He is discovered to have been the giver of all the anonymous £1,000 cheques. His books show that he gave away £350,000 in this way; £45,000 within the last year. He has left more than a million sterling and no will. Mr. Attwood is said to have been connected with the Birmingham Attwoods, and to have made his money principally by glass. A thousand-pound note was found lying about the room, as if it had been waste paper.

Notices of Meetings.

BREWER'S COURT, DRURY LANE.

On New Year's Eve, by the liberality of two of the members of the Parent Society, the following was given as a New Year's gift to 112 of the regular attendants at the Sunday Evening Ragged Church. To each one 4lb. of excellent beef, a 4lb. loaf, half cwt. coals, and a quarter of a pound of tea. To the elder warm under-garments were given by Mrs. Brooker. Suitable short addresses were given.

All seemed gratified with so seasonable a present at this inclement time of the year, and testified their gratitude by attending the following Sunday-evening service, when they were addressed from the words—"God requireth that is past" (Eccles. iii. 15). They were dismissed with a hope and fervent prayer that the year 1875, upon which we had entered, might be to them a year of spiritual blessing in the best acceptation of the words, "A happy New Year:" happy in Christ's love—happy in his work—happy in his paths—happy in keeping his commandments—happy in the glorious anticipation of his second advent. Then, indeed, will it prove "a happy New Year!"

HOPE PLACE, STEPNEY.

Recently a public meeting was held at Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle. R. Baxter, Esq., presided. Opposite the speaker's platform the children were ranged in the first gallery, under the direction of Mr. J. Proudman. After the opening prayer, they sung "Hold the Fort" and "Room among the Angels," the former with great vigour, the latter with a touching plaintiveness, and these two elements prevailed throughout the meeting.

Dr. Barnardo brought two questions before the meeting with reference to the Arab children, in whose behalf the meeting was convened: "Whence come they?" and "Whither do they go?" To the first he gave more than one answer deserving attention—"from our parochial institutions," "from the intemperance of their parents," and "from the debasing influences of crowded lodging-houses." To the latter but one answer was needed—"To speedy ruin," unless arrested by personal effort.

He dwelt briefly on the origin and progress of his work, and referred to the agencies now in operation in the different departments of his mission. Many of the boys, however, were found to be absolutely unfit for any other than a seafaring life, and hence it was hoped that a training-ship, wherein lads might be fitted to enter the mercantile marine, would soon be a part of their general scheme; for as the supply of material would be inexhaustible, so the demand would be unlimited. For which would his hearers subscribe their money—in taxes to support the costly machinery of the law, or in preventive institutions like the one whose claims were

now being advocated; institutions which would lessen crime, and thus proportionately decrease the burdens of the people?

Singing took place between the addresses, which effectually kept the children and audience interested and amused. The whole meeting was a highly successful one, and it would be hard to speak too highly of the singers, who contributed so largely to the enjoyment of the meeting, while they were, in their own little persons, the strongest argument the Doctor could bring forward in support of his work.

OLD PYE STREET, WESTMINSTER.

The anniversary meeting of the Youth's Institute—which was established in July last in connection with the Working Men's Club—was held on Dec. 24th, at the club. It was very well attended both by the members and their parents.

The chair was to have been taken by Sir R. W. Carden, but owing to the death of Lady Carden, he was unable to fulfil his engagement, and his place was well supplied by the Rev. Canon Conway.

The proceedings commenced at eight o'clock, when the drum-and-fife band, who presented a very creditable appearance, marched into the room playing a lively air, after which was sung the opening chant, the 46th Psalm, to verse 7, "God is our Refuge and Strength."

Mr. James Payne read the following statement:—In July last it was decided to endeavour to meet a great want of the district, and to open this room for working lads between the ages of 14 and 18, as an institute where a judicious combination of recreation and education might prove a counter-attraction to the many temptations which beset the young on their entrance into life. The experiment has hitherto been a successful one, fifty-one lads having joined the institute, the membership being 4d. a month.

Simple games, draughts, chess, solitaire, &c., are allowed until 8.15 every evening, and various classes until a quarter to ten. The reading, writing, and arithmetic classes are superintended by Mr. Geary, manager of the institute, the Bible class by Mr. Bayliss, (blind) Bible-reader, the geometry and freehand drawing by Mr. Barker-Harrison, the singing class by Mrs. Barker-Harrison, and the drum-and-fife band by Mr. Matthews, bandmaster of the South Middlesex Volunteers. Mr. Payne assists the educational and Bible classes. The late hour at which many of the lads leave off work prevents their being able to avail themselves as much as they desire of these advantages, but an examination of progress having been held recently, it was decided to award some prizes by way of encouragement. Five prizes will be given for the best writing from dictation and spelling, three for arithmetic, three for Bible class, five for geometry, one for singing, four for drum-and-fife band, and five who have been specially named for general good conduct or improved behaviour in a marked degree. In all twenty-six prizes in money, amounting to £1 13s. 6d., and thirteen books, costing a guinea and a half, being the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Barker-Harrison.

RAGGED SCHOOL MATERNITY SOCIETIES.

THAT very much of the poverty of the lower classes is caused either by too early marriages or by their unthrifty habits, does not admit of a doubt. But, at the same time, it ought not to be forgotten that large masses of men are such unskilled workmen that they have to live by casual labour, especially as dock porters. If, then, the winter is inclement, the docks are closed, and thousands of real hearty workers are thrown out of employment. Again, as by an inexorable law, sickness can never be divorced from poverty; for, what with unhealthy homes—circumscribed space not being the least evil—and insufficient or innutritious food, thorough health is out of the question, and the slightest ailment prostrates the bread-winner, even if his life is spared.

These social evils, of course, react on both mothers and children. The death-rate of infants in the slums of our great cities *is*, in fact, quite appalling. Take Islington, for example, which, so far as respects sanitary appliances, may be regarded as a model parish, and what do we find as respects deaths in infancy? Dr. Meymott Tidy, the sanitary inspector, stated in his last annual report that of 4,393 deaths in Islington, no less than 1,172, or more than one-fourth, were of infants under a year old, and 756 of children who had not attained five years. It is thus seen that no less than 1,928 children, or nearly one half of the total deaths, died under five years of age, and that in a parish whose death-rate is only 19·3 per thousand, or less by three per thousand than any other London parish. Dr. Tidy utterly condemns that false philosophy which asserts that the bulk of poor infants are born only to die, for he traces much of this mortality to unhealthy homes, bad nursing, or the drunkenness of the parents.

In considering the causes of such premature deaths, we should omit an important factor if we did not refer to that abuse of stimulants which is one of the most dominant evils of the poorer classes. Not only do the bulk of the poorer classes drink to excess—in many cases doubtless to relieve the lassitude produced by ill-ventilated houses and insufficient food—but too many give alcohol to mere babes. Often have we seen the gin bottle pressed to the lips of

infants by their mothers, and when we have remonstrated with them on their folly, or rather sin, they have replied, in sheer ignorance, "What is good for us, *must* be good for them!"

Another cause of the undue death-rate of infants is the fatal habit of giving them opiates. This is done either to quiet the "fractious" or to enable the poor mothers to go out to work. A recent case may be referred to as an illustration of an evil which, we are sorry to learn, is growing, as much through ignorance as wilfulness.

At an inquest held by Dr. Diplock on the 22nd of January ult., at the Wellesley Tavern, Robert Street, Chelsea, upon the body of a boy two years and a half old, the father stated that the deceased, who had been suffering from enlarged bowels and hooping-cough, had been given *poppy tea* by the advice of a neighbour. Two small poppy heads were used in making a quart of tea, about a tablespoonful of which was given to the deceased on Monday evening, and he died the next morning. A neighbour said she recommended the poppy tea, but told the mother of the child only to use one poppy head. Replying to the jury, the witness stated that she had often taken poppy tea herself. She thought it would soothe the child, and would have no hesitation in giving her own child a similar dose to that taken by deceased. The medical evidence showed that deceased died from the effects of that narcotic poison.

To counteract social evils like this we know no plan better than that of the Mothers' Meetings attached to upwards of sixty London Ragged Schools. It is there that the conductors, without any of that icy patronage which only degrades, can give advice as to home management; and, without any unnecessary interference, the evils of habits like those referred to can be pointed out. And we are glad to intimate that the ladies who conduct such gatherings are not slow in availing themselves of the opportunities thus afforded to give such advice as has tended to improve both the homes and the habits of many of their poorer sisters.

But a still more important step in this direction, especially as temporal aid is bestowed as well as advice, is that adopted by our Maternity Societies. The object of these societies is to lend baby-linen and give temporal relief and spiritual advice to poor wives in the most critical hour of their history. They, in fact, on a small scale, do what "Lying-in Hospitals" were devised to do on a larger. It is a subject of regret to all who visit the small rooms over-

crowded with children, that there are not more hospitals of this character, as thereby not only would decency be secured, but the lives of many mothers and infants would be preserved.

Of these Maternity or Dorcas Societies fourteen are now attached to Ragged Schools; and their success has been so great that we trust that our larger institutions at least will be led to follow this precedent.

The objects and rules of our Maternal—or Baby-linen—Societies may be gathered from those of two of the pioneer Ragged Schools, in the first of which the plan has been adopted more than twenty years.

I. FIELD LANE, Farringdon Road.—1. The females requiring the box of linen are obliged to give at least one month's notice beforehand. 2. At the time of their confinement they are allowed a box of linen containing the necessary articles, and four shillings is spent for them in tea, sugar, oatmeal, etc. Should the wives be very poor they are allowed more. 3. At the end of the month the boxes must be returned, when they receive a shilling and a small parcel of baby's clothes.

2. GRAY'S YARD, Wigmore Street.—1. This society endeavours to help the mothers of the children attending the school by the loan of boxes of baby-linen and other requisites for one month. 2. Each box is supplied with a parcel of groceries, soap, oatmeal, etc. 3. Two shillings and sixpence is given on the return of the box, if the clothes are found to be clean and in good condition. 4. Each box is supplied with a Bible. 5. The applicant must be recommended by one of the teachers, or some one known to the committee, who acts as a security. The managers have never lost a garment or had any damaged, and only once have they had to withhold the two shillings and sixpence through the baby-linen not being returned clean.

Similar testimony is borne by the conductors of the Maternity Societies connected with Lower Park Road and Rufford's Buildings Ragged Schools. Whilst it speaks well for the moral worth of the recipients of this bounty that they so strictly abide by the rules, this fact also shows that to treat the poor with due consideration is the best way of teaching them to adhere to wholesome rules.

The following cases, which may be regarded as *representative*, show the character and the surroundings of those helped by our Maternity Societies in the hour of special need:—

Mrs. W——, six in family. Living in one room. The father was a gilder, out of work nearly the whole of the winter. The mother was confined when the weather was piercingly cold. There was no fire during the four visits. Twice they were found without a morsel of firing in the grate, the babe being washed in the cold room with cold water. Mrs. S——, six in family, living in one room. Her husband was a porter out of work. The poor woman continued very ill after her confinement, through want of proper nourishment. Her husband worked in the stone-yard and earned a little, but that and the food they received from the school was all they had to live upon. Although so poor, they were very clean. Mrs. N——, five in family, living in one room. The husband was a labourer. As he was ill with rheumatics for several weeks, he had been compelled to part with all that would fetch a shilling. This poor woman was confined in the night, and was obliged to put the baby in a piece of sheet till she could obtain the bag of linen next morning; but was mercifully preserved, as well as her child. Mrs. J——, eight in family. Her husband was a labourer long out of work. The man seemed thoroughly downhearted. His wife had supported the family by taking in washing. At the end of a week after her confinement she recommenced her work at the wash-tub. Mrs. T——, eight in family, all living in one room. The husband, a brass-moulder, had been out of work three months. Often the father came home with a bag on his back; in that bag he had dandelion, which he walked many miles to find. Some of it he chopped up for the children, and the rest he sold in Leather Lane at twopence per basket. In this way he kept his family for some weeks, with the assistance received from the Ragged School.

Not the least of the benefits which have accrued from our Maternity Societies is the beneficial influence which they have had both on homes and character. The visitors—those true sisters of mercy, though without either the dress or the name—have not hesitated themselves to tidy up the homes, and thus have practically shown that there is no reason why the poorest room need not be clean, well aired, and healthy. Again, many of these poor mothers, through the Bible-reading and prayer which form a marked feature in the visit, have been led to attend the Mission Services conducted in the school, and some have given their hearts to Jesus who once said, "We have too much to do to provide for the present world to think of the next!"

With social results like these, all the outcome of our movement, we think that the value of Ragged Schools cannot be exaggerated. Ought not, then, all well-wishers to human progress to echo the motto usually inscribed on the walls of our schools at the social gatherings of scholars, "God bless our Ragged Schools"?

PLEAS FOR PERSONAL SERVICE.

BY D. L. MOODY.

I CANNOT help laying this before the Christians of Britain, with the earnest prayer that they may give it their most urgent attention. For the last week or two it has lain so heavily on my heart, that I am unable to refrain from asking God's people to join me in solemnly facing this dark and terrible problem. Some say this is just the old story of religious destitution, the old appeal on behalf of home missions, which every one knows about, and is sick of. But I venture to say that very few of us know anything about the story, old and sickening as it is.

Here, for instance, in this town of Sheffield, I am told that there are 150,000 people who not only never go near a place of worship, but for whom there is actually no church accommodation provided, even if they were willing to take advantage of it. Thus there are in all, say, 80 churches and chapels, which, allowing an average of 1,000 seats to each, give accommodation for 80,000 people. Supposing each of these to be three-fourths full, you have 60,000 church-going people out of a population of 260,000. It leaves thus a very wide margin to say that there are 150,000 souls in this one town without even the *possibility* of the means of grace.

A moment's reflection upon the appalling state of things revealed by these figures—and I am told that London especially is in much the same condition—is enough to make every one of us who names the name of Christ humble himself in the sight of God. And it seems to me that if there be upon God's earth one blacker sight than these thousands of Christless and graceless souls, it is the thousands of dead and slumbering Christians living in their very midst, rubbing shoulders with them every day upon the street, and never so much as lifting up a little finger to warn them of death, and eternity, and judgment to come. Talk of being sickened at the sight of the *world's* degradation! Rather let those of us who are Christians hide our faces because of our own, and pray God to deliver us from the guilt

of the world's blood. I believe that if there is one thing which pierces the Master's heart with unutterable grief, it is not the world's iniquity, but the Church's indifference.

But this is a mere re-stating of the difficulty. Let us pass round the question. What is to be done for the masses? Let us pass it round from city to city, from village to village, from heart to heart; and let us all contribute to the answering of it, and contribute in deeds as well as in words. Let every man and woman feel that the question is not for ministers, and elders, and deacons, but for *them!* Especially would I lay it upon those who have never worked before, to ask God to show them their own personal duty in this solemn matter. It is not enough that we give our means; we must give ourselves. I may hire a man to do *some* work; but I can never hire a man to do *my* work. Alone, before God, I must answer for that; and so must we all. It is not enough that you say, "My work has been to hire another man's work;" for that hired man's work is, after all, only his own work, and you have helped him to do it better; and his work is counted to his own account, and can never be registered on yours. To help another man to do God's work is well; but it can never take the place of your own work for God; and are there not hundreds of Christians whom God has blessed with wealth and influence sheltering their consciences to-day under the purchased labour of a hired substitute? We think it is cheap service—paying a missionary to live for us his short-lived life in the deserts of Africa; or a couple of Bible-women to do our work in the hovels of the poor at home! But oh! it is very, very dear if it takes the place of the work which God has given to "every man" to do. "*Every man's work* shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare *it*, because *it* shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try *every man's work* what sort *it* is." It is a great truth that the world is saved by the substitution of Christ for sinners; but it is likewise a very solemn thought that the world is being lost by the substitution of one Christian's work for another's.

Next to this great evil of employing substitutionary labour instead of our own, there exists a grievance scarcely less injurious to the spread of God's work among the hearts of the people. Many a man, without neglecting his own work in the least, has the means of employing others in addition, and for this purpose it is no uncommon idea that *anybody will do!* For work among the masses, it is argued, there is nothing like selecting those who have themselves been born and bred within the sphere of the masses. Now this is a fatal mistake. God's servants ought to be the flower of the land. They ought to be chosen from amongst the best that a nation has; and one of the main reasons why the masses are as yet almost untouched by

the power of the gospel of Christ is, that we send the *wrong* men to reach them.

After good men, it seems to me that we want *good methods*. Above all, we want new methods. Not at all, however, that the old methods are bad, but simply that they are old. The best old methods are, perhaps, as good as, or better than, any new ones; but they are *old* methods, and that is enough. The world has got tired of them. It will not have anything more to do with them—the worse for the world, perhaps, you say, but that cannot alter the fact. Men are crying out for novelty. Perhaps a better word would be *variety*. Well, let them have variety. They want it; in everything else they get it; why not in this? If we cannot win the people by old, plainly enough the only reasonable line of action is to try new means: if the new bait does not succeed, let us try again; and if that does not do, let us go on trying till we find a bait that does.

My friends, it is no melancholy *duty:* it is no *misfortune* to find out that God wants us. Those who have this idea of it will be little use to Him, and they will not be long in discovering some means of getting out of it. The excuses which Satan puts into the sinner's heart for rejecting Christ *are nothing to those with which he tempts the Christian to abstain from Christian work*. We have thousands and thousands of Christians who can tell you in a minute why they are not doing anything for Christ. The excuse has been lying there for years all ready formed, and by this time they are perfectly satisfied upon the subject. At the beginning of their Christian life, Satan told them some little lie—"they were too inexperienced for work" perhaps, "they had not the gift," "they might just spoil matters," "they must wait for better openings," and "a fitter frame for service." And so this matter of work has been hushed up. And God's people are slumbering on the faith of such miserable subterfuges, while souls are dying in hundreds at their very doors! God only knows what a fearful revelation it would be, if he were to challenge these excuses this day, and expose their hollowness to our barren and fruitless lives!

It is high time we were waking out of sleep. Let us rise and examine ourselves in the sight of God, and see what is to hinder us from entering the vineyard of his Son. And if we see it to be His will that the God-like work of winning souls should fall into these unworthy hands of ours, let us accept with humble faith the holy privilege, and count no earthly sacrifice too great if it is to help even one of these poor souls to reach eternal rest.—*The Christian.*

LAMB AND FLAG RAGGED SCHOOL, CLERKENWELL GREEN.

This Ragged School has pursued its mission of mercy for about thirty years. The work is carried on in two buildings, one in Lamb and Flag Court, and the other in Red Lion Street; both spots, we need scarcely say, being notorious for poverty, vice, and misery.

In addition to the ordinary operations of Ragged Schools, it has a flourishing "Juvenile Mission," which is thus described by Mr. G. Soltau, the hon. secretary:—

This Mission, which has sprung out of the ordinary Ragged School work, has been eminently useful in deepening the impressions made on the minds of many of the scholars, and in attracting others who had not been in the habit of going to any school whatever. The chief features of this Mission are Special Services for Children, Juvenile Prayer Meetings, and Christian Associations for those who, by their life and conduct, have given proof of the reality of their conversion. We have reason to hope that many have decided for Christ, and are now seeking to follow and glorify him. Their path is a rough and trying one, for very few have any help or encouragement in their homes, and at their workshops and places of business a bitter opposition to all that is good and holy is manifested in almost every instance. Still, amidst all the drawbacks and difficulties, many have stood their ground, and have been enabled by the grace of God bravely to hold up the banner of truth, and not to shrink from confessing Christ before ungodly companions. When the day's work is done, with what delight and eagerness do they come to the various meetings and classes held for them, where their thoughts are led to happier things, and their spirits revived by prayer and praise! Here we endeavour to build up in the faith, on the good foundation already laid, these young converts, feeling how necessary it is for them to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, and also to learn for their own use from Scripture the injunctions about daily life which abound throughout the Bible.

Sickness and death are always at work among some or other of our band, and it is at these times that we are often permitted to see the results of our work, and the answers to our prayers. One of our number thus narrates his visits to the death-beds of two of our little ones:—

"It was at ten o'clock in the evening that a message came, requesting me at once to visit a little girl who was dying, and had expressed a desire to see me. I immediately went, and found her in a little room, on a sort of couch, with her head resting on a pillow laid on

her brother's knee. Her eyes were closed, her cheeks ashy pale, and her chest racked with pain; she was dying of consumption. On being told I was by her side, she opened her large dark eyes, and gave me a smile of recognition. I sat down on a chair close by, taking her cold hand in mine. During my conversation with her, I told her I did not think she would live very much longer, as her breathing was getting more and more laboured, and I asked her if she were not afraid to die. 'No,' she said, with great emphasis, 'I'm not afraid to die.' 'How is it you are not afraid?' 'Jesus died for me,' she replied. Seeing that the effort of speaking was getting too much for her, I commenced repeating some texts of Scripture. 'Him that cometh unto me,' I began; 'I—will—in—nowise—cast—out,' she whispered, 'Behold the Lamb of God'—'that—taketh—away—the—sin—of the world.' 'The blood of Jesus, God's Son,' 'cleanseth—us—from—all—sin.' 'The Lord is my Shepherd,'—'I—shall—not want,' she gasped out, with deep emphasis. All the texts I commenced she finished of her own accord. And where did she learn them? Did that poor mother teach them to her, who sat rocking herself to and fro, unable to speak a word? No; a drunken mother cannot teach her child the way of salvation, for she knows it not herself. It was in the Lamb and Flag Schools she had learnt them; and the seed sown had sprung up, and was now bringing forth fruit. After offering prayer, I asked her if we should sing to her. 'Yes—please—sing "Happy—Land,"' she replied. There were two or three Christians in the room, including her own brother, who had been much blessed to her, and we joined together in singing the well-known Sunday-school hymn, 'There is a Happy Land.' She tried to join, but was too weak, though the bright smile on her face showed how she enjoyed it. We then sang another great favourite: 'Shall we meet beyond the river?' But it was with difficulty we could get through the verse, as we thought of the parting soon to take place. Her breathing began to get more laboured—the death-dew had to be wiped from the calm white face; but still, I did not think she was so near to the 'land beyond the river;' and after a few words, I wished her good-bye for ever in this world. Within ten minutes of my leaving, her happy spirit went to be with Him who died for her.

Not long after this, a little boy, named Tommy, was laid on his death-bed. He, also, was in a decline, from insufficient nourishment and exposure. His bed consisted of a few rags on some hard boards, and his pillow was the top of a costermonger's basket. He was unable to lie down on account of his cough, and his legs were so swollen through dropsy that he could not move them; and there he sat, with nothing to lean against, gasping for breath. His father being dead,

the boy's earnings materially helped to support the family, though he was not more than ten years of age. He longed to go home to Jesus, and loved to hear the Bible read to him. My brother thus narrates his last visit to him:—'I saw him the night of his death, when he said, "Teacher, read." I did so for some time, he not liking me to stop. On asking him if there was anything he would like prayed for, he said, "Ax 'im to give me rest; I have not slept for so long; I *should* like a little sleep; I am *so* weary." And whilst his eyes were so heavy with sleep that he could scarcely keep them open, the painful wearing disease would allow of no rest for the worn-out body. After engaging in prayer, I sat by him for some time, speaking to him of the Good Shepherd, who was so soon going to take him into his rest, until it was time to be leaving; and I promised to call again early next morning, bidding him good-bye, in case we should never meet again in this world. On expressing a hope that he would soon be at perfect rest in heaven, he whispered, "I think He'll give me rest soon, because you axed 'im to." His last words were,—

"Jesus loves me—this I know,
For the Bible tells me so."

I called next morning only to see Tommy's lifeless corpse, his ransomed spirit having joined the heavenly throng just two hours after I left. Those sleepless eyes were now sealed in the long sleep of death, and the peaceful expression left on his face was as though he had been tasting of the joys to come before the summons came from heaven.'

Not only have the elder ones been brought into the Saviour's fold, but some of the very little ones have given sweet testimony of their faith in Jesus, and we have seen verified those words, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.' Not long since a little girl four years of age, who had been a constant attendant at the infant school, was slowly dying. Her parents live in a room very close to the Lamb and Flag Schools, and when the window was open the sound of the children's voices singing would reach the ears of the little sufferer. Her eyes would glisten with pleasure, and if the hymn were one she knew she would faintly join in the chorus, or, waiting till it was over, would softly begin her favourite chorus,—

'We'll cross the river Jordan,
Happy, happy, happy.'

Almost her last words before she fell asleep in Jesus, being 'Happy, happy, happy!'

These instances will serve to show that our labour is not in vain in the Lord, but that he has owned his Word to the children, many of whom we hope to see by-and-by amongst the innumerable company before the Saviour's throne."

In Memoriam.

DEAN CHAMPNEYS.

MR. JOHN ASHWORTH.

In little more than eight years our pages have recorded the death of forty-one Ragged School workers. Some were scarcely known outside their own circle of teachers, but others were as conspicuous on the public platform or pulpit as in the schoolroom. But whether known or unknown, they all did a good work for God and man; and, being true disciples of Christ, they have, through the gate of death, entered the eternal city.

Last month we recorded the death of Mrs. Reade, who, at the great age of eighty-eight, fully illustrated the Divine promise, "they shall bring forth fruit in old age." We have now to report the death of the Very Rev. William Weldon Champneys, Dean of Lichfield, who fell asleep, after a brief illness, on February 4th ult., aged 67. For a quarter of a century he was a member of the Visiting Committee of the Ragged School Union, being in fact one of the first of the London clergy who gave in his adhesion to our movement. Nor was his support merely nominal, for he ofttimes advocated the cause of Ragged Schools both at Exeter Hall and elsewhere; and until his appointment to the Deanery in 1868 took great personal interest in the Ragged Schools of St. Pancras, of which he was vicar. His works written for children, as well as his many brilliant addresses to the young, not only showed great insight into character, but much sympathy with the young of all classes. A steady and methodical worker, Dean Champneys was also a systematic giver. Hence, at a meeting of the "Systematic Beneficence Society," of which he was an active supporter, he stated that "when, as a curate, he received only £70 per annum, he gave ten per cent. of his stipend in charity, and had always acted on the principle of consecrating a tenth part of his income as the Lord's tithe."

The last summoned to his eternal rest is Mr. John Ashworth, who was for many years the life and soul of Ragged School and kindred mission work at Rochdale. It is a manufacturing town of about 40,000 persons, and, like all factory towns, it is notorious for its slums, and its squalid, poverty-stricken population. This well-known philanthropist expired at his residence in Rochdale on Tuesday, the 26th of January, after a lingering and painful illness, in the sixty-second year of his age.

Mr. Ashworth was by descent, as well as occupation, one of the

working class. For thirty-three years he was an acceptable local preacher of the Wesleyan Methodist Association. Though at first he gave little indication of those intellectual and moral qualities which ultimately made his name "a household word" in many parts of England, he was then accustomed to "search out" cases of distress.

It was not, however, until the year 1859 that Mr. Ashworth, by establishing his "Chapel for the Destitute," with a Ragged School, and many auxiliary means of usefulness, found out the sphere of labour for which he was specially adapted, and in which he afterwards found his lifework, to the physical and spiritual benefit of multitudes. In 1861, his first "Strange Tale," called "The Dark Hour," appeared in the *United Methodist Free Churches' Magazine*, and produced a strong sensation. Its success led to the publication of a series of "Strange Tales," founded on cases which came under his own observation. They have had an immense circulation, not only in England, but also on the Continent, into whose languages they have been translated.

In 1868 Mr. Ashworth visited Palestine, and on his return issued "Walks in Canaan," which became very popular in religious circles. Subsequently he published a companion volume under the designation "Back from Canaan."

Mr. Ashworth put forth no pretensions to mental culture or literary skill, but he had what Lord Byron called the "most uncommon sense of all, common sense," and his writings abound in passages of the deepest pathos.

We need scarcely say that Mr. Ashworth's multifarious labours as a preacher, lecturer, author, visitor of the poor and afflicted, &c., made him extensively known outside his own denomination as well as in it; and during the last few years of his life his services were in great demand in aid of various philanthropic movements. His exertions, however, proved to be too great for even his well-built frame, and the time came when he had to desist from the work in which he had so long delighted. His last service was at his much-loved Chapel for the Dettitute, on Thursday, July 24th, 1874, after which he was laid aside from active labour. He suffered from extreme prostration, and finally died of cancer in the stomach.

Mr. Ashworth will be greatly missed in the locality to which his labours were chiefly directed. For he did a work such as it falls to the lot of few men to accomplish, and his memory is blessed. But have not our departed friends left us this legacy, "Never give up the mission to our social pariahs until we too are called to our Father's house"? Then—

"Work on! for Christ has wanderers in the distance,
And thou must call them in with patient love;
Work on! for he has lambs upon the mountains,
And thou must follow them where'er they rove.

Work on! for many a starving one is pining,
Thy willing hand must be outstretched and free;
Thy Father hears the mighty cry of anguish,
And gives this ministry of love to thee.

Work on! for hell's eternal gulf is yawning,
And souls are perishing in hopeless sin;
Jerusalem's bright gates are standing open,
Go to those wretched ones and fetch them in."

VISIT TO A LODGING HOUSE FOR TRAVELLERS.

HAVING visited several lodging houses for travellers, we propose to describe one which is situate in that notorious spot known as the "Mint," Southwark.

Let us tell what we see. A long room, where a fire, big enough to roast an ox, roars and rages up the wide chimney. Four long tables, with forms on either side, upon which sit some sixty men and boys, with here and there a woman. Now, we have fallen in at meal time; and so we must be as modest as all intruders should be, and not interfere with the business in hand—to wit, the toasting of herrings, frying of bits of bacon, brewing of tea, and stowing away of the aforesaid, all done in a style worthy of Britons. But they do not all fare alike; and whilst one, whose fortune or industry has been greater than usual, indulges himself with a bloater and tea, another poor fellow is glad to receive a hard crust from a generous neighbour, and to pour some boiling water upon tea-leaves already pretty well worked upon by their previous and more fortunate possessor. Now, this is a common lodging-house kitchen, and we can take you into sixteen such, all within gun-shot of the one we are visiting; but mind, we are not going there simply to quiz the inhabitants. They are men and women, Englishmen, not wild beasts exhibited for the amusement of the tender-hearted and curious public; and "an Englishman's house is his castle." We know *we* are welcome; and so are you, sir, if you come to help in the work of the evening. But I must tell you what it is. You can stand the heat, and close atmosphere, I hope, for a short time? Pity we cannot get them to use more fresh air. Who could be energetic or hopeful, living in such an atmosphere, and the thermometer at ninety degrees! But, you see, warmth is a sort of substitute for food, to a hungry man.

But we interrupt the proceedings. First, a short hymn is sung. An old one, too:—

"Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne," &c.

God help you, my poor brothers! If ye can raise anything like the ghost of a "cheerful song," it should shame half the thankless hearts into gratitude on this Sabbath night. But lift them up! Never mind though your throats be rough, and your voices gruff, and your ear a little out. Do not fear to spoil the heavenly harmony; for ye sing to a Father's ear, and *He* knoweth the music of the heart, which is all that can delight Him. And now a simple prayer is offered up: a plain, straightforward petition: a prayer prayed as if the suppliant *really* wanted something; and was not merely endeavouring to entertain the Almighty with the recounting of some requirements that might be dispensed. A little bit *too long*, perhaps, but our friend is new at the work; and his zeal is rather greater than his discretion. It is wonderful how different David's grand old psalms sound in this lodging-house to what they do in Bethel Chapel. I wonder if the strangeness of the scene makes us feel, for once, that they are *really* the outpourings of a human heart—a heart which had known the bitterness of sorrow, as well as the blessed comfort of the knowledge of God; of the man who had sunk into the "horrible pit," and "the miry clay," as well as stood "upon a rock," not to be "moved." Certainly those words seem to have a soothing effect upon the weary and wretched men; and not less so those blessed lines from the Gospels which present Christ as the living and loving *Friend;* ay, and the *poor man's* Friend; ah! and yet more, "the sinner's Friend."

But listen! our other friend, for there are two, now addresses them. Words of comfort, words of encouragement; blessed words of charity and hope, such as the Lord let fall into the ears of the publicans and sinners of the Holy Land. We cannot repeat what was said. If we could, it might not look well in print. It would want the polish of the orator's studied style, and the consecutive thought of the theologian. The text was simple enough: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;" and the address was merely an endeavour to lead these poor men to trust in a tender and loving Father, whose love was not only declared, but fully revealed, by the gift of His only-begotten Son. They were burning words, though simple; for the speaker's heart warmed and melted, as the eyes of the men, for a time, lost their listless look, and turned anxiously upon him, as if seeking a glimpse of the Divine love which is reflected in the face of every loving human soul. It was a simple anecdote, too, he told; but it had its effect. It was this:—

"A girl, the only child of a widow, was ruined, and left the home of her mother, whose heart was *broken*, but not shut against the wanderer. All shunned the fallen one until they forgot her. But the mother watched day after day for her return; and, when the night closed in, she forbade them to bolt down the latch of the door, 'lest,' said she, 'my child should come back in the night, and finding the door shut against her, should go for ever.' That poor girl did come back; yet dared scarcely to draw near the home she had left. She stood at the door; but her heart failed her, and she would have turned away. But she was faint, and took hold of the latch to steady herself by, when lo! the door opened, and she entered, and fell weeping on her little bed, where the mother found her in the morning? And think ye, O my dear friends, that our Heavenly Father cares less for *His* children than this mother. I tell ye, nay; but a thousand times more! A mother may forget her child; but the loving God never."

There were cheeks in that lodging-house kitchen so furrowed with wrinkles and scars, that the tears had to wind their way down like streams down rugged mountain sides. Old men, and hardened men, wept, and tried to hide their tears in their tea-cups, as the blessed words of God's own "Gospel of Love" wrung them from their hearts and eyes.

In each of the sixteen houses, such a meeting has been held every Sunday evening for some years. Prior to engaging in this gospel mission, the preachers, who go out two and two, meet in the class-room attached to Harrow Street Ragged School, for prayer.

THEATRE SERVICES.

The promoters of the Special Services in Theatres and Music Halls have just issued the Report of their fifteenth series of services, which is replete with momentous facts, and the most encouraging details of their special work.

In the preface to the Report it is stated that London "has 117,000 habitual criminals on its police register, increasing at an average of 30,000 per annum; has more than one-third of all the crime in the country committed in it; has 23,000 persons living in its common lodging-houses; has as many beershops and gin-palaces as would, if placed side by side, stretch from Charing Cross to Portsmouth, a distance of seventy-three miles; has 38,000 drunkards annually brought before its magistrates; has as many paupers as would more than occupy every house in Brighton; has upwards of a million of habitual

neglecters of public worship! and has sixty miles of open shops every Lord's day!"

The claims of such a city on the sympathy, prayers, and help of Christians throughout the United Kingdom the committee for these services consider to be self-evident. It is far from them to underrate the importance of the ordinary and recognised work of the churches of Christ; but they submit that so long as London is London, the focus and magnet of the three kingdoms, it will ever stand in need of such an agency as these services to gather into the fold of Christ the "waifs and strays," the "shipwrecked" and "lost," in the battle of life.

During the past year the committee report that 367 services were held, attended by about 281,700 persons, making in all, from the commencement of this effort, 2,815 services, attended by 3,119,600 persons.

From interesting reports sent in by the missionaries labouring at the various theatres we extract the following representative cases of conversion:—

Mr. E——, a commercial traveller, and evidently well educated, had been led into evil company and very perplexing circumstances. He was about to rush madly out of the world, but accidentally dropped into the theatre one Sunday evening. What he heard filled him with dread. To rush out of this world would be to rush into the presence of an angry God. He could not do that, and in the agony of despair he asked me, What can I do? He had walked the streets one night without a home and without a friend. He was weak from hunger and but thinly clad. . . . I got him food and lodging, while his relatives were communicated with. His case was to all appearance genuine, and his sorrow real. For two weeks he was lodged and boarded by a poor Christian widow who attended my services, while a clergyman to whom I made known the case provided another opening for him. During the two weeks he was constant at my mission services, and begged me to give him work to do, that his mind might be diverted from his trouble. I found him a most willing worker, sometimes arranging music for my singing class, or assisting in the cleaning of the mission-hall, which was then being repaired. I have every reason to believe that he has entered life again a changed man. As we parted he said, "Mr. T——, away from you I feel as a child. . . . Pray for me, that my new resolutions fail not."

At one of the services, Mr. Jabez Inwards had preached a striking sermon from Rev. iii. 20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." I went towards the door, and I spoke to a young man dressed as a

sailor, and he told me that he felt very miserable; that he had strolled up Waterloo Road, and seeing the door open, he came in, and "I never felt as I have since I heard the preacher." He gave me his name, J. B——, aged twenty, serving on a barge, "George Francis," loading at the wharf near Waterloo Bridge. "Oh, sir," said he, "could you give me a Bible, for I want to read it?" I promised to bring him one. I provided a Bible and went to the wharf; he was on the look-out, and he at once recognised me, and came across several barges moored, and asked me to follow him. I was not accustomed to descend a rope-ladder, but I ventured, and soon set my feet on a barge, and then clambered over one and another, and then descended with him into the cabin. Here by our two selves I set the way of peace before him, heard his simple story, got him on his knees, and during prayer he sobbed aloud. I gave him the Bible, and wrote his name in it, and his gratitude was very hearty. He asked me for my name, and where I lived, and he said, "When I see my mother I shall tell her all about you, and what I feel." Concerning the services, he said, whenever he was in London, and they were held, he should come.

Hints for Teachers.

HOW TO WIN CONFIDENCE.

BY REV. E. OLNEY.

It requires but a few grains of common sense to know that a teacher is powerless for good without the confidence of his scholars. How to get and retain this vantage-ground are the great questions. Such general platitudes as "Love them," "Be what you profess," &c., do not meet the case. Many a teacher who does love his pupils with a strength of affection which would lead him to do anything in his power for them, and who is no hypocrite, nevertheless fails to win that confidence which is essential to effective teaching.

It would be well for the teacher who is conscious of a lack of this power to ask himself the question, "In just what respect do I want my pupils to have confidence in me? Do I want them to believe that I am learned? Do I want them to think me *smart?* Do I want them to acknowledge and respect me for social position or influence? Or do I want them to *feel* that I am a devoted, earnest, and intelligent disciple of Jesus?" Having settled this point, the direction of effort is settled. I will not discuss it, fellow-teacher, but simply commend it to you as worthy of prayerful consideration. Whoever will candidly consider it, bringing to bear upon it just good Christian common sense, such as the Holy Spirit will give to those who seek, will find himself far advanced on the road to success.

Assuming the truth of what has been said, I wish to make a few practical suggestions.

First. Remember that what you seek is not begotten of a sense of duty. You cannot lecture it into your scholars. It is, in this respect, like some other things, "the less said about them the better." The more you talk to them about giving you their confidence, "the more they won't do it." It is even possible for you to make them feel that they *ought* to do it, while they know they don't, and believe they can't.

Second. Do not be too demonstrative and direct in your efforts to secure what you desire. Not long ago I was at a friend's, and while conversing with him noticed a bright, sensitive, nervous little girl of two or three years playing with her picture books, and occasionally eyeing the stranger. She was one of those little ones that you feel at once an irresistible desire to "get hold of." I looked over towards her, and said something to papa about her books, but so that she could understand it. Every now and then I threw in something, not about her, but about what I knew she was deeply interested in. She was soon describing a sort of irregular curve around my chair, but at a respectful distance. I talked on to papa. By and by I extended the hand a little towards her. We talked on, and the coy little creature kept steadily to her work of getting into my arms over the bulwarks of her innate modesty and infantile timidity. But she kept at it, and conquered. "Well," said her father, "that is the first time any stranger ever got hold of her." What my success would have been if I had plunged at her at sight, with that ejaculation, "You darling, how I love you!" anybody can imagine. It is not what you can do for them in direct effort, but a feeling which is wrought in them by what they discern in you, that constitutes the confidence you seek. You cannot force the flower into bloom; but supply it nourishment, warmth, and light, and it will unfold of itself. Make a direct effort upon it, and you destroy it.

Third. Labour continually, and this you may do directly, to strengthen and increase their confidence in others. Small souls make a fatal mistake just at this point. They seem to think that by just as much as they undermine our confidence in others, they win it for themselves. Nothing is farther from the truth. In all proper ways seek to increase the respect and love of your scholars for worthy persons around them, for the superintendent, the pastor, and other members of the school and of the church, and above all for the sinner's best and wisest Friend, the divine Redeemer. In doing this you are cultivating the very plant whose tendrils you would have twine around yourself; and in addition to this you are exhibiting just those attributes of character which are best calculated to win esteem. Do the opposite, and you simply destroy the very possibility of what you seek, by undermining their confidence in everybody.—*National Sunday School Teacher.*

Children's Page.

A SNOW SONG.

On a cold, dark night, when the wind was blowing hard and the snow was falling fast, Conrad Cotta, a citizen of a little town in Germany, sat playing his flute, while Ursula his wife was preparing supper. They heard a sweet voice singing outside—

"Foxes to their holes have gone,
Every bird unto its nest;
But I wander here alone,
And for me there is no rest."

Tears filled the good man's eyes as he said: "What a fine, sweet voice! What a pity it should be spoiled by being tried in such weather!"

"I think it is the voice of a child. Let us open the door and see," said his wife, who had lost a little boy not long before, and whose heart was opened to take pity on the little wanderer.

Conrad opened the door, and saw a ragged child, who said:

"Charity, good sir, for Christ's sake!"

"Come in, my little one," said he. "You shall rest here with me for the night."

The boy said, "Thank God," and entered. The heat of the room made him faint, but Ursula's care soon revived him. They gave him some supper, and then he told that he was the son of a poor miner, and wanted to be a scholar. He wandered about and sang, and lived on the money people gave him. His kind friends would not let him talk much, but sent him to bed. When he was asleep they looked in upon him, and were so pleased with his pleasant countenance that they determined to keep him if he was willing. In the morning they found that he was only too glad to remain with them.

They sent him to school, and afterwards he went into a monastery. There one day he found a Bible, which he read, and learned the way of life. The sweet voice of the little singer became the strong echo of the good news: "Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Conrad and Ursula, when they took that street singer into their house, little thought that they were nourishing the champion of the Reformation. For the poor child was the truly illustrious Martin Luther!

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," especially the homeless boys and girls who crowd our Ragged Schools. Who can tell whether there may not be a modern Luther among the number? For though so great and faithful a servant of Jesus has not yet sprung out of Ragged Schools, we know some earnest preachers of the gospel of the grace of God who were once Ragged Scholars.

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Tears filled the good man's eyes as he said: "What a fine, sweet voice! What a pity it should be spoiled by being tried in such weather!"

"I think it is the voice of a child. Let us open the door and see," said his wife, who had lost a little boy not long before, and whose heart was opened to take pity on the little wanderer.

Conrad opened the door, and saw a ragged child, who said:

"Charity, good sir, for Christ's sake!"

"Come in, my little one," said he. "You shall rest here with me for the night."

The boy said, "Thank God," and entered. The heat of the room made him faint, but Ursula's care soon revived him. They gave him some supper, and then he told that he was the son of a poor miner, and wanted to be a scholar. He wandered about and sang, and lived on the money people gave him. His kind friends would not let him talk much, but sent him to bed. When he was asleep they looked in upon him, and were so pleased with his pleasant countenance that they determined to keep him if he was willing. In the morning they found that he was only too glad to remain with them.

They sent him to school, and afterwards he went into a monastery. There one day he found a Bible, which he read, and learned the way of life. The sweet voice of the little singer became the strong echo of the good news: "Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Conrad and Ursula, when they took that street singer into their house, little thought that they were nourishing the champion of the Reformation. For the poor child was the truly illustrious Martin Luther!

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," especially the homeless boys and girls who crowd our Ragged Schools. Who can tell whether there may not be a modern Luther among the number? For though so great and faithful a servant of Jesus has not yet sprung out of Ragged Schools, we know some earnest preachers of the gospel of the grace of God who were once Ragged Scholars.

Notices of Books.

Guy Beauchamp's Victory.
Natural History Scrap Book.
The Cottager and Artisan for 1874.
London: Religious Tract Society.

Guy Beauchamp is an interesting tale of a boy who, through a Children's Service, was led to become a good soldier of Christ. It cannot fail to morally elevate every juvenile reader.

The Natural History Scrap Book is just the sort of book to interest children in, and so quietly teach them the duty of kindness to animals. The *life* given to the animals engraved renders their portraits worthy of Landseer.

Cottager and Artisan.—We cannot imagine a more welcome visitor to poor men's homes than this serial. Sound to the core in its religious and moral teachings, it contains many practical hints calculated to make them healthier and happier.

The Divine Son and Human Parents.
London: The Book Society.

A very suggestive tractate on parental management, or, rather, what is truer in these last days, *mis*management of children! Not the least important are the paragraphs devoted to a protest against that worldliness which is doing so much to dwarf, if not to eat out as by a canker, the piety of thousands of professing Christians.

Children Reclaimed for Life. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

This work traces the labours of our friend Dr. Barnardo since 1867, when, as a Ragged School teacher, he began his remarkable career of Christian usefulness. Facts which, if we did not know them to be correct photographs, might be denominated as "sensational," stud its pages, and they strikingly show what *thoroughness* can do to reclaim the most vicious or hopeless juveniles. As there is no attempt at fine writing, the narrative is all the more telling from its simplicity.

Correspondence.

RAGGED NIGHT SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—I was glad to learn from an article on "Ragged Night Schools" in your February number, that the committee of the Ragged School Union are directing their serious attention to that important subject, and that they "are strenuously endeavouring to stimulate and extend Night Schools for roughs of both sexes, and especially for those of thirteen years and upwards." These well-named "roughs" the School Board could never even reach, much less

manage; for, as they are only amenable to Christian kindness, they scorn anything like that red-tape discipline which Government Inspectors so much admire. If, then, Ragged Schools do not take them in hand, they *must* grow up godless men and women, a curse to themselves and a terror to society.

But the question forces itself upon our notice—viz., where are voluntary teachers to be found who are capable or willing to perform this pressing duty to God and man?

As a contribution to the settlement of this important question I would make two suggestions:—

1st. Relays of Teachers.—Undesirable as such relays are in *Sunday* Schools, they might with propriety be introduced into *Week-night* Schools. For unpaid teachers could not be expected, and fewer still would be able, to devote three nights to this onerous work. But if nine teachers would agree to devote one night weekly in a regular course of three evenings weekly, this would be sufficient to meet the needs of an average Night School.

2nd. A Bible Week-night School.—Another plan might be adopted which is even more practicable, because its adoption would absorb fewer evenings. Let the school be opened one evening at least weekly for Bible Classes—thereby, in fact, holding a Sunday School on one week night. As on Sundays, it should close with a brief address, or occasionally by reading aloud to the whole school some interesting biography. The stirring—indeed the almost romantic—lives of such men as John Bunyan, John Newton, or David Livingstone, would not fail in proving attractive to the roughest scholars.

Two benefits would be incident to such a Bible Night School. It would give a fair scope for the ability of those whose attainments are too defective for, or who would not care to teach in a secular Night School, but whose gift as evangelists is equally conspicuous. Again, many buildings, it appears, are closed solely because the funds are too crippled to permit an increased expenditure. Now, by such a Night School, the salary of a master and the cost of school material would be avoided, and the only extra expense incurred would be for gas and firing in winter.

Such Night Schools need not commence before half-past seven, or continue later than nine, so as to suit those who are engaged in city or other houses of business.

By either, or, what is still better, by both plans combined, there can be no doubt that buildings now closed on week nights might be opened, and many souls would not only be won for this world but for Jesus.

Yours, &c.,

Q in the Corner.

PRIZE ESSAY ON SHOEBLACK BRIGADES.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I am desired by the Council to inform you that a prize of £5 has been placed at their disposal for the best Essay on "THE MODE OF WORKING A SHOEBLACK BRIGADE." The competition is open to Managers and Officers of Brigades and Refuges.

The Essays must be sent in to me on or before the *8th March*, and bear some distinctive initial or device—the writer's name and address being enclosed in a sealed envelope which will not be opened until the Prize has been adjudged. The Prize Essay will be read, and a discussion on the subject invited, at a meeting of managers and others, of which due notice will be given.

The following points are suggested as worthy of notice in the Essay:—

1. *Admission*—Age and condition of applicant and mode of ascertaining the same.

2. *Advantage* or otherwise of boys sleeping in the Home. Should they provide for themselves or be fed by the Society?

3. *Earnings*—How to apportion the boys' earnings? How to guard against dishonesty? How to encourage habits of saving? Best method of expending bank-money and savings.

4. *Disposal of Time*—in relation to work, play, and education. How can wet days and evenings be most profitably employed. Any indoor trade or occupation suitable for spare time?

5. *Superintendence* of boys while at work.

6. *Sundays*—How to be spent? How to maintain an influence for good over the boys at all times?

7. How long should boys be kept in the Society? Best mode of disposal.

8. How to promote co-operation among the different Societies?

The above are only the points which seem to the Council the most important, and are not intended to preclude the subject being treated in any other way that may seem best.

I am, Sir, &c.,

A. J. S. MADDISON.

Reformatory and Refuge Union,
34, Parliament Street, S.W.
10th February, 1875.

Ragged School Union.

At the monthly meeting of the Managing Committee, held on February 12th, Lord Shaftesbury presided.

Quarterly grants amounting to £63 were voted to sixteen Ragged Schools; also £91 to twenty-one Institutions as named by the donors. Other payments amounted to £77. To New Tothill Street Schools, towards cost of raising the roof, cleaning and repairs, £20, and £12 per year for Night School teachers. To Castle Street School, towards clearing off a debt of £200, was voted £50. To Price's Street School £15 towards salaries to Night School teachers. To Brewer's Court Schools grant per year increased from £20 to £38. Notice of a legacy of £90 received as left by the late H. W. Martin. Annual meeting fixed for May 10th. Applications for assistance received from Schools in Tottenham Square, Britannia Row, Villa Street, Brunswick Street, Carr Street, Richmond Street, Menotti Street, Thrawl Street, and Darby Street. £15 previously voted to Fox Court School ordered to be paid, as the conditions have been complied with. Applications from Brentford further postponed; and from Linton Place and Parker Street withdrawn.

Facts and Scraps.

Field Lane, Farringdon Road.—On February 3rd ult., Mr. and Mrs. Williams were presented with a handsome timepiece by their fellow-teachers at a Farewell Meeting. For sixteen years they have laboured in this school, and for the past ten years Mr. Williams has had the oversight of the Refuge operations. Mr. Williams has just entered on his duties as master of the Leeds Industrial School.

Gray's Yard, Wigmore Street.—Once each month, instead of the usual address, suitable hymns have been sung, and portions of Scripture read alternately with the hymns. At the close of this service a prayer-meeting is held for children and teachers. The average attendance is: children, 55; and teachers, 18. This change is much appreciated by the children.

Jurston Street, New Cut.—For some time past the teachers of the Ragged School have been collecting articles for the purpose of giving the scholars a Christmas tree. The tree, which stood upwards of twenty feet high, presented a noble appearance, being adorned with transparent slates, picture books, and a large number of frocks, comforters, shirts, and other articles of clothing. Generally speaking, the prizes, which numbered over 300, were of a substantial character. An hour was filled up with singing, and a short address by one of the friends on the "History of the Tree." But

the principal attraction of the evening was the distribution of the prizes. Every teacher had a number of tickets in accordance with the size of his class, which he distributed to his own scholars who sat round him. The articles were passed down as the numbers were responded to, and thus the teachers were enabled to retain their seats.

Notices of Meetings.

BRACKLEY STREET, GOLDEN LANE.

A concert in aid of the funds of the sick and destitute of Golden Lane and its neighbourhood was given on 27th January in the Lecture Hall of the City Temple.

The society is composed exclusively of the clerks and others connected with the firm of Messrs. J. and R. Morley, Wood Street, Cheapside, who, together with their employés, are the principal supporters of the charity which was the recipient of the proceeds of the entertainment. The members not only subscribe liberally to the funds, but devote their leisure time to rendering personal assistance in mission work. It has been in existence about nine years, and has a Ragged School in Brackley Street, with a missionary appointed to superintend the work in the network of streets and alleys of that much overcrowded district.

In aid of so laudable an object it is gratifying to be able to state that the attendance at the concert was sufficiently numerous to leave little room for doubt that a handsome addition would be made to the funds. An excellent programme of music was provided, under the direction of Mr. W. E. Curtis, who was assisted by one or two professionals. The first part was composed entirely of selections from the sacred masterpieces of Mozart, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Handel, Spohr, &c., the opening chorus being the "Sanctus" of the first-named composer. The choruses were rendered in a very spirited manner by the members of the Musical Society, the first part concluding with the "Gloria" of Mozart.

KING EDWARD STREET, SPITALFIELDS.

On Wednesday, the 27th of January, the annual meeting for distribution of prizes to the Sunday scholars at the Ragged Schools took place. Mr. H. R. Williams, who presided, and also the Rev. W. Tyler and Mr. R. J. Curtis, took part in the proceedings. Three hundred and fifty children took tea, and thirty-eight received prizes for regular attendance and good conduct. No boy or girl received a prize who had not attended fifty out of fifty-two Sundays.

During the evening recitations were given, and several pieces were sung. One girl recited well a suitable piece containing 210 lines, for which she received, besides other prizes, a money prize from the chairman.

We regret to say that a gloom was cast over the meeting by a letter from Mr. Montague, the superintendent, in which he intimated his intention of retiring from his office through ill-health, after a connection as scholar, teacher, and superintendent of twenty-eight years.

DWELLINGS OF THE POOR.

We have often had occasion to refer in these pages to the wretched dens in which the bulk of the poor are compelled to live, not always from choice, but from the difficulty of renting a healthier class of rooms. Such rookeries abound in every Ragged School district; and we cannot wonder that bodily and moral health are at a discount in such fearful localities. We are glad, then, to report that the Home Secretary has introduced a Bill with the view of putting down the rookeries which disgrace London, and to provide the labouring class with better homes. The scheme is not, however, a novel one; for it is professedly based on plans adopted in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Liverpool under special Acts of Parliament introduced by the respective municipalities.

Mr. Cross, in introducing the measure, stated that he did not consider that it was the duty of the Government to provide houses for the labouring class; neither did he think that it was wise for either individuals or corporations to let rooms under the fair market value. But he pertinently asked—and on this question the right of Government interference hinges—"ought we not to interfere in the interest of the imperilled health of the people? When we find that there exist marvellous irregularities in the mortality of our great towns—when we find that in London the death-rate is 24 per thousand, while in Manchester it is 30, and in Liverpool 38—we get, as statesmen, a warrant for interfering, examining the causes of the unhealthiness of certain towns, and applying what remedies are within our power." Mr. Cross also stated that in certain districts of Manchester the death-rate runs up to 67 or 70 per thousand; a rate of mortality about ten times that of our prisons, and equal to that of a fierce campaign. Still worse, if possible, is the lot of the children in these fever-breeding districts. For the report of the medical officer of Manchester states that 49·7 per cent. of the children under five years of age die in one district.

What is true of Manchester and Liverpool, is equally a photograph of too many districts in London. Houses by the hundred

can be pointed out as veritable fever dens; and when cholera begins its ravages, the first districts invaded by that plague are always the same. In many cases, Mr. Cross states, that as "the houses are engrained with disease, no expenditure of money upon them can make them healthy, and the only practical way of dealing with them is to pull them down. Family after family goes into a house, and it is certain to catch the fever which has killed off the previous occupants. In many cases you find that houses are built upon ground that is saturated with everything that is abominable; miasma rises from the ground through the houses, and nothing can be done to cure this unless you make a clean sweep of the houses. I know of one place in St. Giles, where there are seventy streets close together, without one single thoroughfare through which the residents can get a breath of pure air."

The *Builder* gives this pen-and-ink photograph of some of the houses in Homerton:—"Amongst the places visited were John Street, Hayward's Buildings, Plough Lane, College Lane, Farm Lane, Pickles Buildings, and Sheppard's Lane. From Brooksby's Walk, extending through Brooke Street to College Lane, a large number of the houses on either side are in a very dilapidated condition in their interiors, and the back premises of some were in a really frightful state, when we made our visit. The places of accommodation were brimful of filth, and the seats, flooring, and fittings seething with rottenness and corruption. Between Homerton Church and Homerton Hospital, the dwellings of the working classes are in bad condition, but they must be examined within and at their backs, or else no conception can be formed of their unhealthy state. Many of these houses we are now describing are not very old, neither are they of recent erection; but they are thoroughly ill-constructed, and are out of repair. Apparently, many of them were, when first erected, constructed of the materials of older houses. In a lane off the upper end of High Street, called James Place, the houses have no rear, and contain but two rooms, one below and one above, ascended to by a steep stair. There is a courtway in front, and at the farther end there are two places of accommodation for the six houses. One of these closets is out of repair; indeed, the condition of both in the matter of drainage calls for instant attention, as does the whole court."

But if any one thinks this sketch exaggerated, he need no

travel to the far east to test its accuracy. For he has only to glance at the Irish colonies opposite the Angel, Islington, or at the nest of courts on the east side of Gray's Inn Road, Holborn, to see that the pencil of Cruikshank, or the pen of Dickens, could alone adequately depict these hideous dens.

Surely, then, it is high time to do something to remedy——might we not say *crush ?*—abominations which cast a slur on the boasted civilisation of England, and which are a fertile source of immorality, disease, and death. Though there have been some noble efforts in this direction—eminently those of Sir S. Waterlow and the Peabody trustees—yet they have, so to speak, only acted on the *crust* of the evil, leaving the deeper strata untouched. The question is an imperial one, and, as such, can only be dealt with by the Government. It is, then, to the honour of the "Charity Organisation Society," and the Council of the College of Physicians, that they have directed the attention of the Government to these breeding-places of typhus and cholera, and so forced the question on the notice of our senators.

The scheme introduced by the Home Secretary is not a novel one, as it is virtually only a copy of a plan which has been successfully adopted in certain localities in Liverpool, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. Empowered by a special Acts of Parliament, the municipal authorities of those great social centres have demolished *en masse* many slums—true haunts of disease and shame. They have also driven wide streets through some of the most noisome and dangerous districts. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of the improvements thus wrought in the Canongate by the Act which Edinburgh chiefly owes to Sir William Chambers, of *Chambers's Journal*, and other philanthropists, whose zeal was alone rivalled by their practical wisdom. These cities had, however, to procure the requisite Acts at a considerable cost; the promoters being, in so many words, *fined* for their efforts to provide houses fit for human beings to inhabit. But, if Mr. Cross's Bill passes, the expense of procuring the necessary Acts will not be incurred in future.

The Government Bill may be thus summarised: — If the medical officer of a parish certifies that in any part of it chronic disease prevails, owing either to the bad state of the houses, or the overcrowding of rooms, the municipal authorities may frame an improvement scheme, including the demolition of the rookery, if

they are satisfied with the truth of such report. The plan must be a complete one, with maps and estimates appended. Some scheme, too, of housing the dislodged persons in the immediate district until the new houses are built is made imperative. If the plan meets the approval of the Home Secretary, it will be inserted in a general Act of Parliament, the Government undertaking to carry the measure through Parliament. The municipal authorities will be free either to sell or to let the ground vacated by the demolition of unhealthy houses, or even to erect houses, but on the express condition that such purchases be solely used for the construction of houses for the labouring classes. In order to buy the condemned houses cheaply, the usual bonus of 10 per cent. paid on compulsory purchase will be abolished. The cost of the demolition, and of the sites thus vacated, will be defrayed in London by a general rate levied by the Metropolitan Board of Works.

The success of this measure, of course, hinges on the faithfulness of the parochial medical inspectors. Now, as at present they are selected and paid by the respective vestries, they are necessarily under parochial influences not always of the highest character. In Edinburgh and Liverpool the medical inspectors, by the Acts of Parliament, hold such independent positions that their bread does not depend upon the deference they pay to parochial authorities. A somewhat analagous power is, however, supplied by two clauses of Mr. Cross's Bill; one of which requires the medical officer of a parish to survey and report on any given district on the requisition of twenty ratepayers; and the other empowers the Metropolitan Board of Works, with the consent of the Home Secretary, to appoint a qualified officer to report on the sanitary state of any part of London.

The only fear is that the plan may break down under the extra taxation which it will impose on householders already overweighted and impoverished by parish rates, the School Board tax, the general rate, &c. Hence it has been suggested that, as the question is an imperial one, the whole or at least a moiety of the expense should fall on the consolidated fund. But, however this part of the question is settled, we trust that something will be done to demolish hovels, misnamed houses, in which it is almost impossible for any one to live a decent, much less a Christian life.

EAST END JUVENILE MISSION.

HOPE PLACE RAGGED SCHOOL, STEPNEY.

UNDER the able and energetic supervision of Dr. Barnardo, this Mission comprises a Free Day and Sunday School; a Home for Destitute Lads; a smaller Home for Orphan Boys; and a Home for Neglected and Destitute Girls. All have been the outgrowth of attempts to rescue the most pitiful class of the juvenile poor from lives of degradation, misery, and crime. Imperfect though the agencies were at first, yet, as we think of what has grown out of these agencies, there is every reason to thank God and take courage.

Let us briefly survey the various operations of this institution.

The Sunday and Free Day Schools were the first-attempted steps of this work for Christ. Two thousand children are upon the books. In the Day Schools they are taught not merely the elements of what is now called secular education; but, better than all, the words and the principles of Holy Scripture have been instilled by loving Christian teachers into the minds of the little ones committed for a few brief hours to their care. The building is held on a lease, nearly expired, and, in any case, it is a most undesirable possession. Small, badly-ventilated, ill-drained, and inconveniently situated, it has been condemned by the inspectors of the Privy Council of Education and the London School Board. But, happily, land, hitherto quite unattainable, has unexpectedly been offered at a very reasonable rate. On this it is desired to erect schools, which shall have as their basis the fundamental principle "that education cannot be considered complete which does not include daily instruction of the children by prayerful men and women in those truths necessary for their salvation," and calculated by their known power upon the human heart and mind to beat back the wave of infidelity now threatening to submerge large bodies of the working classes.

A Home for Working and Destitute Lads carried on in Stepney Causeway has 140 beds. When these are all filled, the house is incommodiously crowded. Over the front of the house is a board bearing the welcome words:

"NO DESTITUTE BOY EVER REFUSED ADMISSION."

This statement is literally true. But how can we explain the difficulty created by bearing in mind the limited number of beds, and the unlimited invitation? Only in this way: to make their words true, the managers are compelled to pass boys very quickly through the House, often giving them but three, four, or six months' training, and then sending them out on their life work to make room for others.

Experience, however, has shown that this term of probation is not sufficient to exert much influence over boys who have spent years in street life. If the Home were larger, containing, say, double the number of beds, they might, at a less proportionate cost, keep boys for at least a year under training, and yet be true to the descriptive invitation. Five houses adjoining each other in Stepney Causeway, two of which (Nos. 18 and 20) form the present Home, may be purchased, and altered so as to treble the number of beds, increase the size of the playground very considerably, and give what is greatly needed,—a room as an Infirmary, with an additional Workshop in which one or two new trades could be begun.

A Training Ship has long been felt to be indispensable. Some boys rescued from the streets are utterly unfit for any other than a seafaring life. Their old roving habits, love of liberty, and the age they have reached, make it unlikely that they should give attention successfully to sedentary, or even to agricultural pursuits. The action of the School Board, too, in removing from the streets many boys under thirteen years, has frightened others off, and drawn a large number of lads professedly beyond that age, to fill the gaps caused among the juvenile street merchants by the absence of younger boys. These great fellows apply continually for admission; and for them nothing remains open but colliery labour, agricultural employment, or the mercantile marine. The first is not always available, and great difficulty attends attempting the second upon any large scale. Boys of fifteen, sixteen, or eighteen years of age, are not acceptable in Canada; and the marine service alone requires them. Boys are urgently needed as sailors in the naval and mercantile services. Letters from naval officers of rank and experience, urge the managers to apply for an old man-of-war from the Admiralty, and fit her up as a training ship. But to fit her up efficiently the sum of £5,000 is needed; and without a guarantee that this amount will be spent, the Admiralty authorities are not prepared to make a grant. Nearly £2,000, we are glad to say, are already promised, one gentleman alone having offered £1,000 a year for three years towards the establishment and maintenance of such a ship.

The Girls' Home at Ilford, Essex, contains room for sixty. It is *too large*, for experience has shown that even sixty girls congregated together under the same roof, however wise and careful the social laws may be which govern their domestic life, are in danger of losing that softness of manner, and, above all, that force of character necessary to their future welfare. Girls are best reared up in small groups, each of which should have its own centre in the person of a carefully trained and motherly woman, whose affections could be drawn out

towards the children forming the little social group, and by means of which the highest known form of culture—viz., that of *the family*, might be obtained. To meet this difficulty, it is intended to build thirty cottages, each of which shall contain twenty girls, mothered and cared for by a Christian housewife. These cottages will cost not less than £350 each. A few weeks ago, in direct answer to prayer, the first cottage was promised by a gentleman in memory of a deceased daughter.

Nor is this all that the East End Juvenile Mission is doing for our social waifs and strays. Thus—

A Boys' Beadle is out almost every night searching low lodging-houses and other haunts for destitute children.

The Edinburgh Castle and Coffee Palace is open daily from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. In the large hall, seating 1,500 persons, religious services are held every night at 8 o'clock. For the residue of the lease, £4,500 was paid; that large sum being collected in three weeks. A *Big Tent* (seating 3,000 people) for summer use only, is annually erected upon a plot of ground opposite the Edinburgh Castle.

A Cheap Coal Depôt is supplied with best coals from wholesale dealers. During the last severe winter they were retailed in small quantities, at cost price, to the deserving poor. *A Pure Literature and Tract Depôt* supplies Bibles, tracts, and good attractive reading to the neighbourhood. And last, not least, a *Free Dinner Table* gives each week 200 dinners to the needy children of the Free Day Schools.

Numerous operations like these of necessity require much space. We are not surprised to learn that eighteen buildings are in daily use. Large as is the work, we are glad to learn that there is no lack of helpers. Thus seventy-seven voluntary and thirty-six paid, but certainly not hireling agents, are employed. All, however humble their part in this great work, are energised by the same spirit; and the aim of all is to win old and young for Jesus.

LIFE IN GOLDEN LANE.

If any wish to see what life is in a London "Slum," he need not journey to the far east to see dens and witness scenes which cry shame on our common Christianity; for a ticket taken for the Aldersgate Street station of the Underground Railway will land him in a genuine Ragged School district, though within five minutes' walk of Guildhall. Life in Golden Lane is very different to what it is in respectable streets and squares or in Belgravian mansions. Including as it does a population of about 20,000, the district mainly consists

of costermongers, fish-hawkers, thieves, and cockney Irish of a very low type. Each family lives in one room, for which they have to pay from two-and-sixpence to four shillings a week. Cleanliness is almost entirely unknown. Vice in its most hideous mien is the everyday feature of the place. Go up any street at a late hour on Saturday night, and it is a huge market, with indescribable noise and confusion and riot. On Sunday morning it is, comparatively speaking, quiet. Here and there a few ragged and dirty children are playing in the street, or the unshaved and unwashed natives of the district are lolling lazily, with short pipes, against the walls, or the shopkeepers are endeavouring to do a little business by retailing such of the necessities and luxuries of life—in the shape of provision or raiment—as they think most attractive; but I fancy the greater proportion of the grown-up inhabitants are in bed resting from last week's labours, or sleeping off the effects of last night's debauch.

The names of the places are grotesque. Here we came to Green Arbour Court; then I found myself in Hot Water Lane, and I heard of families living in *Angel* and *Porter* Court?

Most of these courts were the reverse of attractive. In some there was a drain in the middle. In many of them the family linen was hung across the street to dry. In one I had a narrow escape from a shower from an upper room, which certainly would have been anything but refreshing or welcome. As it was, when I sat down to my Sunday meal it was with a poor appetite. I felt disgusted and wearied and sad. Men and women in their degradation are shocking to see. In the afternoon I went another round, and found matters worse. The enemy had sown his tares. Brother Bung had opened his public-house, and the whole population was wide awake. Beery men and slatternly women were to be seen everywhere. As to tidy females, they don't seem to exist in Golden-lane, and a woman is far gone indeed when she ceases on a Sunday afternoon to study personal appearance. Happily there is much open-air preaching there. For preaching in the open air, in a court in the summer-time, is preaching to hundreds who would not move an inch to hear the Gospel. Ashamed to enter a place of worship, they do not desire in any way to be mixed up with respectability or piety. As I was listening, a young female planted herself by my side with a pennyworth of cat's-meat in her hand. In an ordinary decent assembly, such a young person would be regarded as a nuisance rather than otherwise. In Golden Lane, on the contrary, she was perfectly in keeping with the surroundings. Indeed, with her unwashed face, with her dirty hands, with her unsavoury clothes, she was a fair representation of the genius of the place, and yet as much a lady as "Clara Vere de Vere." Has she not an immortal soul to be saved?

Mr. W. J. Orsman has a very successful mission close by. In Brackley Street, a street leading out of Golden Lane, a chapel has been utilised for Ragged School and missionary operations many years by Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., and the young men in his employ. In Hatfield Street there is another Ragged School, in which some of the young men from Copestake and Moore's not only labour earnestly, but give liberal pecuniary support.

The three Ragged Schools embrace nearly 700 scholars, and above 300 adults. But large as is this number, they are only a twentieth part of a population for the most part buried in sin and sorrow. When, oh! when will Christian men and women fulfil the command of their Lord, "Occupy till I come"!

LITTLE BOYS' HOME.

Among the fair fields of Kent, in the parish of Horton Kirby, near Farningham, stands a prosperous juvenile colony, where some 300 boys find a happy because an industrious home. They are of necessity very young, because the doors are closed against candidates who have passed ten years of age. A small proportion of them are orphans in the ordinary sense of that word; whilst a larger number are orphans in a more painful sense still, having living parents who are unworthy of the name. This Home is designed exclusively for little boys who are either homeless and destitute or in danger of falling into crime, and none are admitted who are eligible for the ordinary orphan asylums.

Once admitted to the Horton Kirby colony, a boy is introduced to one of the ten cottage homes of which it consists, and taken charge of by the goodman and his wife who superintend the household, and act as foster-parents to the inmates, of whom there are about thirty to each cottage. The plan adopted at the Home appears to be, in the first place, to secure the boys as young as possible, when their minds are most impressionable, and before they have had the chance of going very far wrong, and then, side by side with intellectual and religious instruction, to give them a thorough training in some industrial calling which shall enable them, when they grow into manhood, to earn their own living and become useful members of society. Employment is found for them as soon as they are fit to go to it, and even after they have left the colony their career is watched with paternal care.

This Home, which is now doing such a large and good work, has grown wonderfully in usefulness since the day of its origin in 1864. Operations were first commenced in the then recently vacated parish

poorhouse at Tottenham. The late Mr. Robert Culling Hanbury was the first president and principal supporter of the movement. Beginning with thirteen boys, the number increased in two years to ninety. It was then determined to establish the new colony in Kent, the Princess of Wales, who still retains the position of patroness, laying the foundation-stone in 1866. Five of the cottage homes were then erected, and subsequently—thanks to private munificence and public subscriptions—five others have been added, besides a large central workshop, a school, a chapel, and an infirmary.

To arouse further public interest in this admirable institution, some 400 ladies and gentlemen, representing most of the public and private schools in the metropolitan district, were invited to attend a *soirée* at the Cannon Street Hotel on Saturday, March 6th ult. In different parts of the large hall groups of active little boys were to be seen engaged in their usual industrial occupations. Here was a company of juvenile carpenters; here a party of lads busily employed in shoemaking; and in another corner were some intelligent lads engaged in type-composing and printing. Near them were a number of youngsters plying the knitting-needles, and others working sewing-machines. Then there was a band of little ones working away at the Kinder Garten system, demonstrating the utility of useless things, and converting shapeless nothings into pleasing and fantastic forms. These little fellows are taught in early life to love and cultivate the refining influences of music. The specimens which they gave to the audience on Saturday of their instrumental and vocal powers were highly creditable, and were the more pleasing because of the evident joy and pride of the performers themselves in what they were doing. Afterwards Mr. A. O. Charles, the secretary, described the position, character, routine, and educational system of the colony, his remarks being illustrated by a series of beautiful dissolving views. Altogether the *soirée* cannot fail to achieve its object of awakening a deeper interest in an institution which has already done so much to initiate poor boys into the blessings of home life.

CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

From a return just presented to Parliament, we are glad to find that, notwithstanding the large growth of the population of the United Kingdom, there has been a steady decrease in the number of criminals since the year 1859. This may be partly due to the vigilance of the police; but we think that we are warranted to refer no small part of

this moral improvement to the action of Ragged Schools and kindred efforts on our social outlaws.

In the year 1859 it appears from this Report that the number of persons committed for trial in England and Wales was 16,674, 12,782 being males, and 3,892 females. Of these 12,470 were convicted, a proportion of about three-fourths, and 4,175, or about one-fourth, were acquitted, all who were discharged without trial being included among the acquittals. Last year the number of committals presented a diminution, and for the last six years the decrease has been steadily maintained, notwithstanding the growth of the population. There was in 1873 a total of 14,893 committals, 11,490 being males, and 3,403 being females, of whom 11,089 were convicted and 3,757 acquitted. This gives a daily average for the year of a little more than 40 committals, whereas the daily average of the year 1859 was nearly 46, showing a reduction of 6 per day in the fourteen years. The proportion of females to males in the committals has slightly decreased in the same period. In 1859 the percentage of females to the total committals was 23·3, but in 1873 it was 22·9, a reduction of ·4 per per cent. in the fourteen years.

In Scotland the committals in 1859 were 3,472, of whom 2,402 were males and 1,070 females, a striking contrast to the English and Welsh tables, as it gives a percentage of 30·8 females to the total committals as compared with 23·3 in England and Wales. In 1873 the number of committals was 2,919, a decrease of 553 on 1859, and the number of convictions was 2,230, or 333 less. The percentage of females committed in 1873 had fallen to 22·7.

In Ireland the total committals in 1859 was 5,865, including 4,462 males and 1,403 females. Of these 2,735 were convicted and 3,109 acquitted. In 1873 the committals numbered 4,544, a decrease of 1,321 as compared with 1859. The number of females committed shows a great decrease, having fallen from 1,403 in 1859 to 820 in 1873: or in exact proportion the percentage of female committals to the total committals in 1859 was 23·9, and in 1873 it was 18. The total commitals in the United Kingdom in 1873 were 22,356, and the convictions numbered 1,586, showing a reduction on the year 1859 of 3,655 committals and 1,907 convictions.

But, unhappily, though crime has thus decreased generally, one offence—namely, wife-beating, shows a lamentable increase. Thus Colonel Henderson, the chief of the metropolitan police, has just reported to the Home Secretary that assaults on women and children show a steady and continuous increase from 280 in 1870 to 351 in 1874. The causes to which the prevalence of this class of offence are to be ascribed appear to be:—1. Intoxication consequent, to some extent,

on increased earnings. 2. The wretched dwellings of the poorer classes. The more experienced officers of the metropolitan police advocate, as a rule, longer sentences of imprisonment and the infliction of corporal punishment, especially in the cases of brutal assaults on women. The offence known as garotting has practically ceased. The opinion of the police is that corporal punishment has tended very much to assist them in the suppression of this class of offence. There seems, however, some reason to believe that this peculiar offence was confined to a very limited class of persons. All the English judges, with three exceptions—Justices Brett, Denman, and Keating—many chairmen of quarter sessions, magistrates, recorders, and others, have expressed opinions in favour of an extension of the penalty of flogging for crimes of violence, but qualified generally by the recommendation that the power to inflict such punishment should rest only with the higher tribunals of justice. But a *permanent* improvement can only be found in the moral influences brought to bear upon the lower class by religious education, decent dwellings, and consequent habits of order and thrift.

TALLY SHOPS.

While every one will hail with rejoicing the forthcoming Bill for applying the cat to the shoulders of cowardly wife-beaters, attention should not be diverted from the causes leading to such outrages. Among these, one of the chief is the pernicious system adopted by some drapers of employing tally-men to tout for custom, with full leave to give as long credit to the women-folks as may be necessary. Any one who chooses may gather proofs of the mischief done by these pestilent reptiles by following their slimy traces from alley to alley. In each, stories will be heard of the happiness of families shattered for ever because the Eves have suffered themselves to be beguiled, as their mother in Paradise, by wily serpents possessing the gift of speech.

The process of temptation rarely differs. On the first visit of the tally-man, Eve, being not long married, proves rather coy. The trashy wares offered for her inspection appear very pretty, and if she had the money, little time would be allowed to pass before a bargain was effected. But she has little cash on hand, except that given her for housekeeping expenses, and she hesitates either to touch that sacred fund, or to pledge her husband's credit. So on this occasion the tally-man wends his way onwards without having done business, but feeling comfortable in the conviction that a lingering for the forbidden fruit will remain constant in his prospective victim's mind. Nor

is he out in his calculation. On his next visit Eve becomes a purchaser on credit, and when Adam inquires where she obtained the new fal-lals that she wears, she replies that they have been purchased out of savings from the housekeeping allowance. So the good man is satisfied, and being proud of having so thrifty a spouse, he asks no more questions even when Eve again and again appears in new dresses or bonnets.

Thus the matter goes on, until the serpent considers the time has arrived for payment. At first a little is squeezed at the expense of the household luxuries; so after the necessaries grow scanty, the tally-man will not be staved off. The husband notices the changes at home: Eve is no longer cheerful, or the house a comfort; and the secret oozes out at last, when Eve stands convicted of misappropiating funds intrusted to her for a specific purpose. After this disclosure peace departs from the household. Adam takes upon himself the payment of all bills for necessaries, and Eve, unable to provide the tally-man with funds from this source, recklessly purchases flimsy finery on credit, until at last the tally-man's employer demands payment from her astonished husband. He being unable to pay, and moreover being somewhat defiant, the matter is placed in the hands of a lawyer, and in due course of time the unfortunate husband finds himself sold up and disgraced through the folly of his wife in listening to a specious tempter.

Is it wonderful that, after this, a brooding sense of wrong should sometimes lead the injured man to lift a dastardly fist against the woman he had sworn, only a few years back, to cherish all the days of his life? We do not seek to extenuate such outrages, or to mitigate their punishment. But at the same time it would be well for the law to put down its foot inexorably upon the slimy reptiles and their owners who conjointly cause such offences to abound. No one would wish to interfere with legitimate trade. But it is altogether intolerable that wheedling scoundrels in the employ of grasping shopkeepers should be privileged to breed dissensions between husband and wife, and to wreck the peace of happy households, for no other object than their own profit. By all means, we say, let wife-beaters be flogged, but do not allow the real authors of such outrages to escape with impunity. If Adam deserves lashes, the serpent who tempted Eve to taste the forbidden fruit ought to be summarily crushed by the civilisation he offends. The tally system should be improved off the face of the country, as the truck system has been.—*Land and Water.*

STORY OF A RAGGED CHURCH.

Some years ago, upon the occasion of holding special religious services for the working classes in Stevenson's Square, Manchester, on the Sabbath afternoon, addresses were delivered by various humble men from the neighbouring country towns, whose hearts the Lord had opened. After speaking for a short time in the square, they adjourned to the Preaching Hall, or Ragged Church, Old Garratt, singing through the streets on their way thither.

Among the number that followed was a poor, forlorn, desolate-looking creature, without a coat on his back, with a wife and child following him. He was evidently impressed with the addresses delivered in the square. He was passing through the city on tramp, and his pitiable condition led him to think he was unworthy even to enter an upper room, though prepared solely for the reception of such characters. He left his wife and child outside, while he ventured to seek admission after the throng had passed in. Upon entering the room, he inquired of the friend in charge of the place, if he might be allowed to enter in his forlorn state, which contrasted so ill, he thought, with the Sabbath day and the worship of God. After an earnest assurance that he was truly welcome, and that the service was just intended to meet his case, he, according to desire, got up near the platform.

At the conclusion of the meeting, he came to the door, weeping bitterly, when the following conversation took place:—

"My friend, have you found it good to be here?"

His reply was, "I have found there is a Saviour for me,—salvation for a wicked wretch like me. Oh, what a wretch I have been! I am a returned convict, having been everything that is bad. Oh, how vile I have been! what a villain to my poor wife and child! and I have found there is salvation even for me."

"Yes, my friend, there is salvation for you. What a precious Saviour you have been invited to come to! There is forgiveness with God, that he may be feared. However aggravated your guilt may have been, the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin; yea, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool."

He continued weeping bitterly. The friend and he sat down upon the stairs and wept together.

At the assurance of love and mercy so great, "How thankful," he said, "I feel, that I have come in here this afternoon, to find that the salvation of Jesus is even for me."

On being invited to stay to a cup of tea, he gratefully declined;

and while attention was being given to others, the poor man, with his wife and child, disappeared.

Some time after, one of the young men who addressed the meeting was passing along Swan Street, when he was saluted by a respectable-looking man with his wife. "You don't remember me, sir?" "No, sir," was the reply; "you have the advantage of me." "I am the poor returned convict who was led to the Saviour through your instrumentality. I am now, by the blessing of God, filling a responsible situation."

The other week the young man received a letter from him in Scotland, where he was staying a short time for his holidays, telling what God had done for his soul, and expressing the desire that his friend should meet him in the Isle of Man the following week, enclosing the necessary amount for his expenses.

Behold, what God hath wrought in the restoration of the poor convict to his Saviour, his family, and the world! "Go ye into the highways and hedges, the *streets* and *lanes* of the city, and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled," was the command of our Lord. And happily the fruits of this and other Ragged Churches show that the Gospel of the grace of God is just the very message of love that our social outlaws need to rescue them from lives of sin and shame.

Hints for Teachers.

PREVALENT DOCTRINAL ERRORS.

MR. EDITOR,—In a day like this, when those twin-sisters, Romanism and Rationalism, are doing their utmost to poison Christianity at its source, we cannot be too particular in advancing no doctrine in behalf of which we cannot say, "Thus saith Jehovah." I would then direct the attention of my fellow-teachers to a prevalent doctrinal error which vitiates the class instruction of too many earnest Ragged School teachers.

From much of the theology now in vogue, ignorant persons—such, indeed, as form the staple of Ragged Schools and Ragged Churches—would scarcely learn that God *the Father* devised the plan of redemption. Just as some of good Dr. Watts's hymns for children fail in presenting the blood of Christ as the sole means of pardon, so many of the revival hymns now so popular, equally fail on the other side by ignoring our Heavenly Father. Now when teachers overlook the first Being in the Trinity, they forget Christ's reiterated assertion that he was the "*sent*" One (John iv. 34); and that the *Father* "so loved the world as to *give* his only begotten Son" to redeem it. But when

this truth is fully taught, then it is also seen that Christ did not come into the world to render the Father placable, but that he came simply because God was already reconciled to man (2 Cor. v. 20).

As one doctrinal error usually engenders another, this false view of God the Father has led many revivalists, both in hymns and addresses, to speak of Christ as the Sin-pardoner. Now, though the blood of Christ is the sole procuring cause of forgiveness, it is the prerogative of the Father alone to pardon sin. The Biblical doctrine of salvation is this: The Holy Spirit convicts, and shows man the penalty, of sin—the blood of Christ, and his intercession with the Father, are the media of pardon; and the Father forgives the penitent on the ground of the vicarious sacrifice of his Son. In this way the three Beings in the Trinity combine without confounding their distinct functions in the redemption of mankind.

When the Bible doctrine of Christ as the Sent-one, and the Father as the Sin-pardoner, is declared either in the class or at the desk, then the awakened cease to view him as one who, because he is too angry to pardon sin, delegates it to his Son. Nor is this all. With the filial affection this truth evokes, the awakened soul can speak to the Father without any dread; and we then realise that perfect peace which no one can feel who does not accept Christ's teaching (John xvi. 26, 27): "I say not that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you because ye have loved me."

Yours, &c.,

MNASON.

HELPS TO FASTENING THE TRUTH.

THE Ragged School teacher aims not only to impart Scripture truths to his class, but to bring all to the feet of Jesus. But, having received these truths, the pupils, like those of Paul, are very apt "to let them slip."

Can this be prevented? In other words, can truth be so imparted that it shall also be *fastened* upon the mind and heart of the scholar?

The conditions for receiving truth are not always equally favourable in the mind and heart of any one. Both may be preoccupied or distracted, and in either case the truth will have but poor opportunity. Let us therefore learn to avoid in our school-rooms or class-rooms whatever may unfavourably preoccupy attention or absorb interest. Uncomfortableness of all sorts has this tendency, as have all inharmonious doings and sayings.

But, even where all the surroundings are studiously adapted to draw mind and heart into the most favourable attitudes, much may be lost by a teacher's tardiness. Entire absence, unless previously and wisely provided for, will almost certainly prevent the fastening of truth. But a great deal is also lost by a teacher's failing to be in time to receive and direct the first of his scholars who enters the room. He comes early, but you are not in your place to greet him. If you are first there, a shake of the hands and a few kind words will draw his heart toward you. A few allusions to the lesson for the day, a few inquiries as to the sort of home-preparation he has made, or a few hints as to how such work may best be done—either or

all of such remarks will turn attention toward the lesson, and prepare the mind for the coming work. It is quite clear that all this is lost by the teacher who hurries in as the school is called to order, having left his class an abundant opportunity to tangle their thoughts and interest with a score of youthful projects.

We sometimes fail of fastening truth because we allow it to be too much in the *mass*. It is in "lumps," not well defined or clearly digested. Let us select just the special truth each pupil needs, and aim to impart that, even if nothing else is done. Boys may shoot at targets with an old gun, and they may possibly hit. Marksmen, however, use the rifle, and plant the solid shot exactly where it tells most. So let us shoot one truth at one vulnerable point.

After all this, let us *follow* up our work. Converse with scholars as you meet them, and make the lesson a matter of talk. Review your topics from week to week, from month to month, for reviews renew.

Finally, remember that the real fastening of truth comes from the Holy Spirit. Pray for his aid—not in vague general terms, but pointedly, personally, persistently.

Ever remember that fastened truth fashions the soul. My God so help us to secure it, that we may become, if we are not already, "wise to win souls."

Children's Page.

THE SCOTCH PIPER'S SON.

In connection with St. Giles's Ragged School there is a Refuge for boys at Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn. It is a very plain, roomy house, fitted up with dormitories and workshops. Applicants for admission come from the casual wards and the streets, or are sent by magistrates and city missionaries, or hauled in neck and crop by the "Boys' Beadle." Three hundred and sixty-nine of them were taken in last year.

As the teachers do not believe in idleness, the boys are set to work at once, either as shoemakers, carpenters, wood-choppers, or tailors. Five days in the week they are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; and you may be sure that the love of God in sending Christ to redeem the world is not forgotten.

Some of these poor boys have strange histories. Shall we tell you of one?

He was the son of a Scotch piper. He was born in a notorious alley in the Strand, which is now pulled down for the new Law Courts. His father was in the army, but on his discharge took to playing in the streets and in public-houses for his living, until his death, which took place a few years back.

The mother deserted the boy, and he tried to get his living as best he could by selling "lights" and a halfpenny newspaper.

"Well," he was asked, "and where did you lodge at night, my lad?"

"In the 'Mint' when I got the money."

"And what did you do when you had not got the money?"

"Sleep out, sir."

"Where?"

"Anywhere."

"Tell me one place."

"Last summer I slept for four months on the barges down by Thames Street. Once I was caught about four o'clock in the morning by the police, and taken off to the station."

"Well, what then?"

"Why, in the morning, I was taken to the Mansion House, before the Lord Mayor."

"Well, and what did he say?"

"Why, he said, 'Now mind, this is the first time you have been before me; I shall let you go this time; but remember, if you are brought up again for sleeping out, I shall send you to prison!'"

This threat to punish a child for sleeping out when the child had not the wherewith to sleep under shelter is like to knocking a man down and kicking him for falling. The consequence of it was the boy migrated to the West-end, and took his residence under the stalls in Covent Garden Market. At last he heard of the Refuge and came there, was admitted, and is now a merry little shoemaker, bidding fair to earn his *bed* and something more.

TWO HEARTS WARMED.

MOST of our street-arabs are noted for their cheerfulness. Always looking at the bright side of things—ever expecting something to "turn up"—they bear cold, and wet, and even hunger, wonderfully well. This is especially the case with Irish boys, who are always merry *if* not wise. One of these, as a gentleman passed by in his carriage, said to a grumbling companion, "Wouldn't that swell give something to have our *appetites?*"

Another boy was the brightest member of his Ragged School, though one of the poorest. One biting winter evening he was standing on the kerb-stone selling the *Echo*. His bright smile and witty sayings brought him many a customer. A young lady, as bright-looking as himself, bought a paper for her father, and said in tones as kind as her words, "Arn't you very cold, poor boy?"

Pat looked up at her with his face all aglow, and replied, "I was till you spoke to me so kindly!"

Yes, the kind question, as well as the equally kind look, had warmed little Pat's heart as much as any fire could have done. And we could not help thinking that the dear girl's heart also became all the warmer when she saw what a kind word *can* do.

Try the experiment, dear young reader, not only when the snow falls thick, but at all times, and seek to warm the heart of some ragged one, nor doubt that your heart will also be warmed. S. A.

Correspondence.

SENIOR SCHOLARS' AND UNION PRIZES.

Sir,—I have been struck by the small number (I speak proportionally to those who are eligible) of "Senior Scholars" who claim the prize of seven-and-sixpence and "Certificate" of good character, the former given by the Ragged School Union, and the latter signed by our honoured President, Lord Shaftesbury, to those who have kept their situations in a creditable manner for twelve months. I cannot but think that some of our friends, by not looking up candidates, are neglecting to confer what is of incalculable benefit, not only to the children, but to our Ragged Schools generally.

That the Certificate is invaluable as a "character," and will pave the way to the most trustworthy spheres, cannot be doubted. But what is of the highest importance is the consolidation of our work, the retention of our senior scholars, following up past impressions, guiding them at a critical time, urging them to a decision for Christ, keeping them from their old haunts, preparing them for, and ultimately fixing them as teachers; and this the system of scholars' prizes is accomplishing in a very large degree.

My present object is, however, to speak of the encouragement we have had while obtaining certificates of character from the employers of our candidates in accordance with the requirements of the Ragged School Union, and I will just take the case of one lad I have known about eight years, and I must say concerning him, that for a long period he was one of the most troublesome lads I ever had to do with. His first employer writes:—"B—— Street, January 11, 1875,—I certify that A—— B—— was in my employ from September 11, 1872, to July 12, 1874, during which time he was a very honest boy. Signed, F—— J——." He is now a clerk in an important office. The senior partner of the firm says:—"We like the boy very much, and he suits us well. He came to us as an errand boy, but we have promoted him to a clerk, and if he behaves himself has a capital opportunity of getting on in the world."

I need not comment on the above, but ask, Was it at home, or was it in the street, or at the Ragged School, that such a character was formed, and an honourable career begun? Surely we can only attribute such results to the subtle yet powerful influence of the school, and rejoice over such as "fruit after many days."

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Richard Bennetts.

Gray's Yard Ragged School.

Ragged School Union.

At a meeting of the Managing Committee held on March 12th, the subscriptions and donations for February were reported to be £386 3s. 8d., including a legacy of £90; and the expenditure £322 9s. 1d.

Quarterly grants to twenty-one schools towards the payment of teachers' salaries, £112 15s. Other payments, £83 8s. 4d.

Grant of £5 to Brentford School towards the cost of new stoves, &c.; £10 to Villa Street School towards clearing off a debt of £33; to Carr Street Evening School £3, for books, &c.; to Richmond Street School £20, towards liquidating a debt of £70; to Menotti Street School £2, for school material.

Grants were voted for payment of Night School teachers in Britannia Row, Carr Street, Menotti Street, Thrawl Street, Britannia Street, Holloway, and Rotherhithe.

Applications for grants from Chequer Alley, St. James's Place, Hatfield Street, and Portland Town, were deferred.

Notice of a share of legacy by the late J. T. Jefferiss was received, the appropriation of which is in the discretion of the trustees.

Facts and Scraps.

East India Road.—On January 20th, a Social Meeting of this Ragged School was held, in order to enlist fresh teachers, as, for want of a sufficient staff, it was likely to collapse. Mr. H. Green, jun., who presided, and also Messrs. Gent and Curtis, warmly advocated the interests of the school. As a result of this meeting, and of an appeal in the *East End News*, twenty persons have proffered their services.

Great Queen Street, Holborn.—The Grocers' Company have just made a grant of £100 to this Ragged School. The Fishmongers' Company have also voted 100 guineas to the Chichester and Arethusa training ships, which form so important a feature in this institution.

Kentish Town.—At a recent social meeting of the teachers and scholars of this Ragged School they unitedly presented the girls' superintendent, Mrs. Summers, with an electro-plated tea and coffee service. This lady has superintended the girls' school from the first, and it has grown to what it now is under her fostering care.

The Queen and Ragged Schools.—Her Majesty, we are glad to say,

has again shown her sympathy with our work by giving Field Lane Ragged School a donation of £25, through the Bishop of London.

CAMBRIDGE RAGGED SCHOOL.—In connection with Emanuel Congregational Chapel there is a flourishing Ragged School. Several students at Cambridge University are teachers. Amongst the most earnest is Mr. J. W. Lord, son of the Rev. Isaac Lord, Baptist minister, of Birmingham. After a very brilliant academic career he has succeeded in becoming Senior Wrangler.

LIVERPOOL RAGGED SCHOOLS.—The late Mr. Roger Lyon Jones, of Princes Park, Liverpool, has, among many other philanthropic legacies, bequeathed to the Kirkdale Ragged School and the Industrial Ragged School £200 each.

LEYTON ROAD, STRATFORD.—The iron room recently erected in the Leyton Road, Stratford, for the carrying on of Mr. Dowding Samson's work amongst the factory girls, was opened by a private meeting of Christians for prayer and praise. The work was commenced in October last, in a small room only eleven feet square, which has long been overcrowded, very many having been refused for want of space. Everything is done to keep the work as private as possible: many girls who would neither attend church, chapel, nor mission-hall, willingly come to a building which bears on it this notice: "Private room; admission by ticket only." There will be held in it weekly working parties, at which the girls are taught to make underclothing for themselves, the materials being supplied to them at a reduced rate; classes for instruction in reading, writing, &c.; a weekly Bible-class, occasional religious services, lectures, tea-meetings, &c.; a free library of suitable books. Also a Sunday-evening service; and monthly prayer-meetings for girls.

MANCHESTER RAGGED SCHOOL.—Wood Street, Deansgate, one of the most wretched and vilest neighbourhoods of Manchester, has in it a Ragged School, Mission Hall, and Boys' Home. The building, erected twelve months ago, is the result of six years' hard work. There is a band of thirty workers, who go out every Saturday evening, in the vicinity of "gaffs," theatres, flaring gin-shops, and to the masses; give tracts, handbills, books, &c. Thus, 3,000 to 4,000 are sent out weekly.

NOTTING HILL FREE LIBRARY.—Thanks to the initiative of Mr. James Heywood, and to the co-operation of Mr. P. A. Taylor, Notting Hill now possesses a Free Public Library, which has been established without appealing to the ratepayers. A house in the High Street, Notting Hill, has been adapted to this purpose, and contains a men's reading-room, in which the library is placed, and where the morning and evening papers, a variety of magazines, and special publications suited to the tastes of the skilled artisans of the district, are supplied; and also a women's reading-room. The volumes are lent out under certain conditions.

CAIRO RAGGED SCHOOL.—This Ragged School, which was founded and is superintended by Miss Whately, daughter of the late Archbishop of Dublin, is in a flourishing condition. As a token of his interest in the School, the Khedive of Egypt gave the land on which the School and Refuge are built.

DYING FROM WANT OF AIR.—An

inquest was held by Mr. Bedford, at the Vestry Rooms, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, on the body of an infant, named Anne Fletcher, which had been found dead in bed by its mother. A *post-mortem* examination having been held by Mr. S. Mills, the divisional surgeon for the Bow Street district, he deposed to the following effect:—That all the organs of the body were in a healthy condition, and that it was simply poisoned by the want of oxygenated air. The parents, with their family, five in number, occupied a room in Angel Court, Strand, in which, though it was only large enough to hold a bed, a table, and two or three chairs, they carried on the business of paper-box making, a business entailing a constant smell of stale paste. The utter want of ventilation and the offensive smell from the overcrowding of the house were such, the surgeon said, that it simply perished from want of air.

PAUPERISM.—The Poor Law returns show that on 8th March the metropolitan population of 3,500,000 have to maintain, wholly or partially, 98,381. The returns establish the fact that almost without exception there has been a considerable decrease in pauperism in the metropolitan parishes and unions throughout the year. The total number of indoor poor amounts to 36,389; the out-door poor adults, 35,542; and children, 24,626; together, 98,381, as against 105,941 at the corresponding period of 1873. This shows the gross decrease of pauperism to be, as compared with last year, to the extent of 6,560.

ASHLEY DOWN ORPHAN HOUSES. —The thirty-fifth Report of the proceedings of this institution speaks of the Lord's abundant goodness in the supply of all its need. It supported during the year 2,261 orphans, aided 189 home and foreign missionaries, supported 60 Day Schools, 28 Sunday Schools, and 7 Schools for Adults. Eight Day and five Sunday Schools have been added to the "Scriptural Knowledge Institution" during the past year. Mr. Müller writes: "We looked to God for help, and were not confounded: He was in the fortieth year our Treasurer, as during the previous thirty-nine years He had been."

FORTUNE-TELLING. — The Chief Constable of Sheffield summoned six fortune-tellers before the stipendiary for fortune-telling. His attention was directed to the practice by numerous complaints caused in families by their prognostications. One of them prophesied the death of a woman's husband and family within a year, and another woman was induced to prepare for the death of her husband by what was told her.

Notices of Meetings.

KINGSLAND.

The Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting of this Ragged School was held in the Kingsland Congregational Church Schoolroom. The chair was taken by the Rev. T. W. Aveling.

Some forty children of the singing class, together with eighteen teachers

and friends, sang various pieces during the evening. Miss A. Mercer presided at the harmonium, and Mr. Hoon, the superintendent, conducted.

The first resolution was moved by Mr. Curtis, from the Ragged School Union, and was seconded by Mr. Scrutton, of the School Board The other speakers during the evening were Messrs. Mann, Hoon, Lidstone, and Rev. T. W. Aveling.

Mr. Hoon, in his remarks, spoke of the deep interest the parents manifested in the prayer meetings on Sabbath evenings after the close of the general school, and mentioned, at their request, that such meetings are now held every Sabbath, instead of twice in the month, when frequently over one hundred persons attend. At the close of one of these meetings a young man, once a scholar, came to the superintendent, and, after some little conversation, he said: "Sir, I have great cause to thank God that ever I entered the Kingsland Ragged School, for it was there I learnt to love Christ, and I am now a Sabbath School teacher." The general behaviour of the scholars has greatly improved, and there is every reason to believe that some of the elder scholars are under serious impressions, as there is a desire on their part to follow a Christian life, although the difficulties in their way appear to be great. Sixty of the children meet every week for the practice of singing, when the superintendent gives some scripture question, to which 6,979 correct answers have been returned. Thus the children's minds are stored with hymns, and they are led to search the Scriptures. Services of Song are held during the winter months, which are learnt by the children of the singing class, and are much appreciated by all those who attend them.

LEICESTER.

The Annual Meeting of the friends of these schools was held in the New Lecture Hall. The Mayor, C. Harding, Esq., presided.

Mr. Lawrence read the Annual Report, which stated that the greater portion of the work was done by voluntary agency. The 33 teachers who form the Sunday School staff also give their services many evenings during the week, the only paid agents being the teachers of the Day School. At the Week-day School the average attendance was—in the morning 168, in the afternoon 189. The Sunday School is held three times every Sunday, and the number of scholars on the roll-book is 358. The average attendance during 1874 was—in the morning 109, in the afternoon 258, in the evening 127. The Library has 300 volumes, and the number of children who receive books from it is 80. Magazines have also had a ready sale amongst the children; 1,368 numbers have been disposed of during the year. Reward books are given once a year to those scholars who attend more than sixty times on Sunday, and eighty-four earned the prize last year. When a death occurs amongst the scholars or their parents the other children are invited to contribute towards the funeral expenses. A Night School for those who go out to work is held once a week during the winter months. The average attendance is 43. An Adult Class also meets twice a week throughout the year to receive secular instruction. During

the summer months a short religious service was held every Wednesday evening, the average number attending it being 60. An Evening Singing Class for girls is held every Monday evening. The number on the books is 32, and the average attendance is 21. A very fairly attended Mothers' Meeting is also held the same evening. A Band of Hope has just been started, and numbers at present 34 members.

The meeting was addressed by Messrs. J. H. Buckingham and Curtis, of the Ragged School Union; Revs. E. Davys, A. A. Isaacs, and Messrs. Ekin, Hollingsworth, and Hughes.

PENDLETON.

The twelfth Annual Tea Meeting of the members of the Workpeople's Mission Hall, Pendleton, was recently held at the hall in John Street. About 450 persons sat down to tea, and a public meeting was afterwards held. Mr. Thomas Briggs occupied the chair.

The Hon. Secretary, Mr. John Sugden, then read the Annual Report, as follows:—

"The Ragged School has increased one-fifth in number; the scholars have become more regular and orderly, and never has the work amongst our young people appeared more hopeful than of late. For eight months a Scholars' Prayer and Conversational Meeting has been held on the Sunday night at the close of the school, and often attended by over 100 young persons, not a few of whom, we believe, have been truly converted. When volunteers were asked to go into the streets with invitations to children not attending any other place, a number of the scholars most cheerfully gave their services, bringing in about 150 boys and girls, till we had not accommodation sufficient for the fresh comers. Since last February a Sunday Afternoon School has been held for poor children not connected with any other school, and the attendance has been from 70 to 163. The attendance at the Sunday Night School, which in summer months averaged 235 each Sunday night, and in four other months 424 per night, in November reached 501, and in December 566. The last quarter in the year the average attendance per night was 463, as compared with 373 in former years. Of special note we have to mention a decided advance as regards one of the oldest and best agencies of our association, viz., the house-to-house sale of publications. Last year 8,520 of our own halfpenny *Visitor* and 9,552 penny publications being thus distributed. Also about 2,000 *Band of Hope Reviews*, etc., amongst the Ragged School scholars, with copies of the gospels and other books. A religious service for the children has been held each Wednesday night, the attendance averaging 116 per night. Temperance principles have been inculcated at the Band of Hope meetings held, with varying numbers ranging from 30 to 210. A Free Night School has been held weekly in the winter months, the scholars numbering about 50. The services for the poor have been held each Sunday afternoon, with an average attendance of 48, and night attendance of 91, and Wednesday evening attendance 33. There have been 13 Open-air Services: average attendance, 180.

THE RAGGED SCHOOL PRAYER MEETING.

THAT, whether viewed in their social or religious aspects, Ragged Schools have been a success from the very outset, is happily as much a truism as that two and two *cannot* make five. If, however, there were any doubt on the subject, the prize scholars to be publicly rewarded on the 10th instant, and the 337 licensed shoeblacks diligently at work as *public servants* in our leading thoroughfares, would decide the question. And, again, we have only to look at the large number of former scholars who now occupy the teacher's chair to see how reproductive have been our labours.

But what is the secret of such startling successes? We use the word "startling" advisedly; for cases innumerable have adorned our pages which savoured more of romance than of reality, though they were but an unadorned transcript of facts which any reader could test. Surely not mere teaching or giving could have wrought such wondrous results. No; it is to something higher and surer than man's labours that we must refer those conquests in the social battles to which our strength has been given. Needful, then, as earnest work is as a link in the chain of blessing, yet nowhere in Scripture is success promised to those who do not *manure*, so to speak, continuous labour with prayer. But where the two are combined, then precious fruits must be gathered sooner or later; since the Divine promise has never been repealed—"Ask, and ye SHALL receive, that your joy may be full!"

In recognition of the promise which annexes blessing to prayer, it is that the Ragged School Union framed its seventh fundamental rule—"*All* its meetings shall begin and end with prayer." This rule is rigidly adhered to at every meeting of the Central Committee; nay, the first hour of its first yearly meeting is consecrated to earnest intercession for the work and the workers. Nor can we hesitate in affirming that the unity which has characterised its meetings, as well as the practical wisdom which has marked most steps in advance, are due in no slight degree to the way in which conflicting opinions have been harmonised by united prayer.

It is this belief in prayer as a necessary link in blessing (Ezek.

xxxvi. 37) that has led the Committee of the Ragged School Union, for the past quarter of a century, to request the teachers of the affiliated schools to hold special prayer meetings on the Sunday prior to the annual meeting. This year

The Annual Prayer Meeting for Ragged Schools is appointed for Sunday, May 9th.

Last year a circular was sent by the Central Society to all the connected Ragged Schools, requesting such united prayer on the Sunday prior to the annual meeting; and we are glad to report that *all* our Sunday Schools warmly responded to the invitation. Many letters were received from local officials indicating how the prayer hour was occupied. From some of these letters—representative as they are of most other Ragged Schools—we make the following extracts:—

The friends at Buross Street, Commercial Road, said:—"In compliance with the wish of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, a special service of prayer took place on Sunday, May 10th, at the end of the afternoon school. Between sixty and seventy stayed behind to take part in this meeting, which was conducted by several well-known friends of the school. Short prayers, interspersed with appropriate hymns and a few words of exhortation, made it a happy gathering, which will not be soon forgotten by those who had the pleasure of attending."

The superintendent of Collier's Rents School, Borough, stated:—"There were present fourteen teachers and about thirty elder scholars. The matters named in your post-card were supplicated for at the Throne of Grace, and more especially for the beloved Chairman, that a special blessing might be poured out upon his lordship, and that the life of his lordship might long be spared to preside over the affairs of the Society; also that wisdom and grace might be given to all the officers of the Union, that they may be able to carry on the affairs, for the good of souls, and to the honour and praise of our God."

The secretary of Townshend Street School, Old Kent Road, writes as follows:—"I am pleased to say we had, I think, the best prayer meeting ever since we have existed as a Ragged School. There were fourteen teachers, twenty-seven friends, and twenty-four scholars present. There were six earnest prayers for the welfare of Ragged Schools in general and for the success of the annual meeting at the hall, and a warm-hearted address given by

a friend of one of the teachers, impressing upon us the vast importance of prayer (daily if possible) to Almighty God for his blessing on our labours; to endow us with wisdom that we may be wise to win souls for Jesus; and to determine to be more active in the service of the Lord, and to be on the watch for the least symptom of conversion in the scholars. I truly can say for one, we seemed to have our Heavenly Father in our midst, so hallowed did the place seem. I would add, further, that last month one of our scholars was admitted to church membership with us, another has joined Mr. Spurgeon's, and both have been the means of leading their parents to the Saviour."

The secretary of Villa Street, Walworth, reported that—"There were present twenty-nine teachers and twenty-three children. Prayers were offered by the secretary thanking God for special favours bestowed upon our school, and the success of the Ragged School Union during the past year. Prayer was offered by two male teachers beseeching Divine favour to rest upon the meeting of May 11. Prayer was offered by the superintendent for a special blessing upon the president and officers for the ensuing year. Prayer was offered by two female teachers for individual classes, and for a greater outpouring of God's Holy Spirit, so that each teacher may be made more zealous during the present year than ever they have been before."

The superintendent of Smith's Place, Shadwell, stated that—"As I read the card on Sunday evening to the adult part of our meeting, and referred to some of the good arising from the Society in Smith's Place, the response was—'Yes, bless God, there has been great good done.' Thus the whole of the people entered into the spirit of prayer, and a very refreshing time it was, which we trust it will be this evening at the great meeting at Exeter Hall."

The friends at Hertford took a further step, for they communicated the wish of the Central Society to the various congregations of Nonconformists, who at once responded. The superintendents of their Sunday Schools set aside the usual class teaching in the latter half of the alloted time, and held a special meeting for prayer and praise.

But, happily, the Ragged School prayer meeting is not confined to this special occasion. Most schools hold a prayer meeting at the close of the school; some, indeed, both before and after

teaching. By the last report of the Ragged School Union it appears that nearly ninety hold such prayer meetings every Lord's day, the average attendance of teachers and elder scholars exceeding 2,500.

In addition to this, at some few Ragged Schools there are *scholars'* prayer meetings, not rarely conducted by themselves. No one is called on to pray, all being spontaneous. The prayers are brief, earnest, and to the point. They invariably ask for something with the same directness as marked the prayer of Manoah (Judges xiii. 8, 9), and, as in his case, specific prayer is found to bring a direct and not rarely an immediate answer.

We trust, then, that the year upon which we have entered will be marked by that importunate prayer which, taught by the Spirit, and based on the finished work of Jesus, will take no denial. For surely if prayer for our movement were ever needed, it is more required now than ever, seeing how dark is the prospect of many valuable Ragged Schools, and when so many earnest workers feel "as when a standard-bearer fainteth." For, as Luther said in a time of great perplexity, "I am in great straits, *therefore* I cannot do with less than four hours' prayer this day." So at this crisis in Ragged School history we may well feel that the "wisdom which is profitable to direct" can only come from prolonged and believing prayer. Nor do we doubt that such earnest prayer will be honoured like that of Daniel (Dan. ix. 20-23): "At the *beginning* of thy supplications the commandment came forth." For, happily, even in these last days, when so many pseudo-philosophers deny the efficacy of prayer, it is still found to be a precious fact—

"Prayer moves the arm that moves the world!"

CHILDREN IN THE LONDON "SLUMS."

As population increases, so also must streets and houses increase. And population gets larger every day. Many souls emigrate, many die, but still more are born, live, and flourish; though how many of these do live is a matter of marvel, if not of miracle, to those who are familiar with the byways of London.

It must be true, as says the French proverb, that there is a special providence for children. But for this, amongst the poorest and lowest, few surely would be reared. You constantly see pale,

emaciated infants languishing in the arms of sisters or mothers; the latter dirty, ragged, unhealthy-looking, both morally and physically. The infants, apparently, are at death's door. If they belonged to a more refined state of life they would die. But here they do not die. They struggle and fight upwards into a sort of existence; an existence which turns them out sickly, puny, and stunted, perhaps, but yet with breathing-room in the world. There they are: the spark of life has conquered; though in how many cases would it seem better had the struggle ended differently!

But yesterday I passed through a terrible bit of London—loathsome as a plague-spot. One of its most favoured courts rejoices in the name of "Frying Pan Alley." You turn up Frying Pan Alley, which is a *cul-de-sac*, and not only can touch the walls on either side with your hands, but almost with your shoulders. The place is indescribably dreadful and filthy. During daylight it appears to be thickly peopled with women and babies—especially the latter. Yesterday a group of girls and infants lounged on its entrance-step. Could a sketch of them be given just as they then looked, it would read a lesson more eloquent than words can utter. The babies were lying flat, their eyes closed, with chalky, hollow faces, with black rims round their eyelids. The girls, varying from eight to eighteen, were pitiable objects, familiar doubtless with every species of crime and wretchedness, but to goodness all unknown. Growing up with the better part of nature, born with every one in conjunction with the worse, perfectly unthought of, so that it inevitably dies out perhaps for ever.

What an enormous amount of trouble we take to convert—say the Hottentots or the Patagonians! What societies, what subscriptions, what meetings, what preachings of sermons by great and popular men in the Church! Perhaps the one ought not to be neglected for the sake of the other. But if the Establishment were to rise up in a body to convert London, as it often rises up and shakes out its ruffled feathers for the benefit of the poor heathens, this seething metropolis would not still be the black hole, the fearful abode of sin and depravity, that it has been for countless ages—a state of things that, in this enlightened, mission-loving nineteenth century, is not on the wane, but on the increase.—*The Argosy.*

WHAT GLASGOW IS DOING FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN.

From a paper just issued by the "United Evangelistic Committee" of Glasgow, we glean the following particulars of its work among the neglected children of that great commercial centre. An article by the *Mail* Commissioner, which appeared in the columns of that paper, raised public sympathy very much in behalf of the suffering children. On reading this Mr. Moody was so touched by it that he wrote a letter to the *Mail* appealing to the Christian fathers and mothers in Glasgow to build a home for neglected children. Mr. Quarrier, whose labours are so well known, offered to undertake the work if the money were forthcoming. Two ladies at once gave the £6,000 needed, so that in a little time Glasgow will have a refuge for not a few outcast houseless children.

Still it was found that a large class could not in this way be reached. Maggie's case was one in point: she has a mother to whom she is much attached, and they refused to be separated.

At a Conference it was suggested that an Industrial Feeding School, after the model suggested and successfully carried out by Sheriff Watson, of Aberdeen, was best suited to meet the difficulty. The United Evangelistic Committee took up the matter. A school at the corner of London and Charlotte Streets is now opened. It has at present an attendance of seventy.

At the same Conference, it was suggested that an immense amount of good might be done by sending to the country those children whom it was considered advisable to separate from their parents for a longer or shorter period. The Committee were afterwards offered, at Saltcoats, a mansion, with large garden attached, which they rented and fitted up as a Home for Neglected Children, where they are fed, taught, and have Christian training. Already twenty-eight are in this Home. Advantage has also been taken of existing institutions to the fullest extent—the Committee having avoided starting new organisations, unless when found absolutely necessary for the success of the work. Twenty-seven girls have been sent to the Institution at Maryhill, three boys to Mossbank, three to the Cumberland training-ship, four to the Shoeblack Brigade, two sent to sea, and several to situations in Glasgow; making the number of children thus helped 135 in all.

A special service, under the superintendence of a joint committee of the Sabbath School Union and Foundry Boys' Society, is held for poor children every Sunday afternoon. A lesson on the black board, listened to with marvellous interest, is given them, after which they

receive a little soup and bread. No one who sees the sad state of those thus helped, can fail to rejoice that they are being cared for, temporally as well as spiritually.

Another work of great interest is that carried on by the Saturday Night Rescuing Band, the members of which—all young men—plant themselves near the singing saloon, theatre, and principal public-house doors, giving Scripture leaflets to all who enter these places, or pass that way. Upwards of three quarters of a million leaflets have already been circulated in this manner. It is a matter for thankfulness that so many have thus had the gospel offered; in addition, we rejoice that many very young persons have been deterred from entering places which are evidently doing the devil's work in this city, and ought therefore to have the vigorous opposition of all Christian young men.

Whilst the Band are at work in the streets, a large company is met in the Drill Hall, at the Temperance Prayer Meeting, pleading for blessing on the leaflets distributed, and that the Lord's people may be stirred up to more vigorous action against the drinking customs of our land, and that drunkards may be converted. At this meeting very many have signed the pledge. Some of them are doing well, and, as many are young people, who are daily suffering the pains and miseries common to the drunkard's family, we trust that from their ranks an army may grow up pledged to increasing warfare with our national foe.

Another party of the Rescue Band were induced to visit the brick-fields at midnight, in order to get acquainted with, and if possible benefit, the young men and boys who, all through the exceptionally severe cold of the past winter, slept night by night at the kilns. The following letter speaks for itself and explains why this step was taken:—

"Sir,—I have the pleasure of writting this letter to you for the purpos of stating sum facts to you which I think there is sum people don't seam to care much about. I have bean in the Hall every Sabbath-day since the Hall opened, and I has heard severall prayers offered for people in great affliction; but there is a few young men comes here every Sabbath-day that would require a few words to the Lord to get them out of there affliction, and, sir, I am one of them. These men, sum of them, has not been in a bed this two month; we sleep in brick-fields, coke-ovens, and at coal pits, all through the dulness of trade, and they have got so far reduced that no one will give them employment. You can eseily distinguish them in the Hall by the Blackness of their faces. I have known three or

four that has passed to their Home all through starvation and exposure to the cold, and in a Cristian Nation, and no one to give a helping hand to those recked on the Ocen of Life; but if we can't find a friend in this World, we Hope that God will be a friend to us. There is good people cumes to this Hall that has sum influence that would try and get them employment; we would do well if we could only get a helping hand. I know some that has resorted to crime all through their misfortune. I hope you will not be offended with this letter, that all we want is to offer up a general prayer for us tomorrow morning, if God Willing, and, Sir, you will greatly Oblidge your Humble Servant,

"FROM ONE THAT WISHES TO DO WELL.

"Glasgow, December 26, 1874."

We are glad to say that many of the lads spoken of have got situations, and are seemingly determined to keep steady and do well. One, picked up in a dying state, was sent to the Infirmary, and, after a lingering illness, expired. He was a Roman Catholic, but listened gladly to the gospel story, and professed to trust in Jesus. To meet the case of the lads at the Kilns, and a number of others whose education was very deficient, an evening school was opened for lads upwards of fourteen years of age. This is also succeeding well; the roll contains 180 names, and an average attendance of 100 scholars, and thirty voluntary teachers.

LIVERPOOL CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

IN no city are Children's Services so well attended, or more popular, than in Liverpool. Fourteen of its well-worked Ragged Schools hold Children's Churches, the aggregate congregations being 1,552. As in London, the service is rarely prolonged beyond one hour, the lively hymns introduced by Messrs. Moody and Sankey forming not the least attractive part of the service. By these hymns, which have nothing but Christ in them, many, we are glad to say, have been led to give their hearts to Jesus.

A writer in the *Sunday School Teacher* gives the following sketch of these services:—

"The day had been spent in visiting several of the Sunday Schools in different parts of that far-spreading town, and we might reasonably have rested from our labours, but in the course of our visits we were startled by the statement that 10,000 children were gathered every Sunday night at separate religious services, held in some forty different places.

This was more than sufficient to arouse our curiosity. That a movement of this kind could have been carried out so extensively excited our surprise, and banishing all thoughts of fatigue we determined to see for ourselves how the work was done, and to learn what we could of the agency employed. So, under the guidance of a friend personally interested in the work, we started on our mission.

Liverpool, like the great metropolis, has absorbed within its ever-extending boundaries places that at one time were suburban hamlets and villages. Toxteth is one of these, but, beyond the name, it preserves no reminiscence of its former rurality. Countless streets, with monotonous rows of houses all built after one type, thickly planted with beer-shops and public-houses—this is the Toxteth of to-day. Here a capacious 'tabernacle' has been erected, and the school-room beneath is one of those kindly granted for a Children's Service. Quite a crowd of youngsters were literally struggling to get in, and with some little difficulty we made our way through them into the room. The sight was impressive and encouraging. Some 600 children were seated on long rows of forms facing a central platform,—the boys on one side of the room, girls on the other, with a few adults scattered amongst them as 'monitors,' to maintain order.

The children were mostly of the rough-and-ready class, such as throng the by-streets of all large cities and towns, and nine-tenths of them but for this service would in all probability have been playing in the neighbouring thoroughfares. Just the class of children whose parents, alas! seldom attend divine worship themselves, and leave their children to go where they like.

Where could they go? The services at church or chapel had no interest for them, and if a few did occasionally creep in, it was solely for the warmth and light. The great bulk stayed in their usual playground—the back street—desecrating the Sabbath, forgetful of the lessons many of them had been taught in the earlier parts of the day, associating with bad company, and forming evil habits. But evidently this did not arise from any preference for play, for no sooner was it known that these places were opened *for children only*, than they flocked in in such numbers as to crowd them; and as we looked at the restless, somewhat noisy assembly, we rejoiced that such efforts had been put forth on their behalf with such hopeful prospects of usefulness.

The children are not admitted indiscriminately. On attending for the first time, a printed slip is given to each child, which has to be filled in with answers to certain inquiries. This information being brought on the next attendance, is duly entered in a roll-book, and a

probationary card is given to the scholar, which entitles to admission for five Sundays, after which, if his conduct is satisfactory, he receives a full ticket of membership for one year. This ticket has to be produced each time the child attends, and is stamped on entering the room, under the date of the day, so that parents can, if they please, know whether or not their children attend.

At the time appointed for commencing the service the doors are closed and no more are admitted; this ensures punctuality.

The order of service is very simple, generally following a programme recommended by the committee. A bell in the room being rung by the precentor in the chapel above, as a signal that the congregation there were about to sing, a hymn was given out, and we sang also, but inasmuch as we sang with much emphasis and a peculiar metre, it is very likely the congregation heard more of us than we did of them, and the bell being rung again as a signal that they had ceased, we sang our last verse in a whisper, which was a decided improvement. The children joined in the prayer that followed, repeating sentence by sentence the words of the friend who led their devotions. After further singing, prayer, &c., a text was given out (there is a little book of texts prepared, one for each Sabbath), which was repeated by the children several times until they knew it thoroughly; in this way their memories are stored with passages of Scripture.

We then hastened off to another service. This was also in a room under a chapel; about 100 children were present, and nothing could be more orderly and attentive than this little auditory whilst listening to an address.

We wished to see yet another gathering. We arrived, however, only just in time to see the children dismissed, but were told that there would be a short supplementary service for such as chose to remain. About forty children stayed; a hymn was sung, followed by a short prayer, and then an address intended for the more direct personal application of the truth which had already been taught in the address to the larger gathering. It is no part of our purpose to criticise, so we simply say that this second service when held requires to be judiciously and prayerfully conducted, with special reference to the judgments and feelings of the young, who are not much interested in mere platitudes.

Services such as these were going on simultaneously all over Liverpool, with an aggregate attendance of 10,000 children. Originally started by the committee of the Liverpool Sunday School Union, this work has so extended as to justify its being carried on by a distinct organisation, and it is now under the care of a committee of friends who devote their best energies to its successful prosecution. They

have printed thirty hymns in large bold type, suitable for hanging against a wall, so that all may read them, and thus save the expense of hymn-books. Handbills, cards, membership tickets, roll-books—indeed, every requisite for these services—are published under their auspices."

EXHIBITION OF HANDIWORK OF RAGGED SCHOOL SCHOLARS.

Exeter Buildings, Chelsea.—On the evening before last Good Friday the work of the children of this school was grouped, so that the teachers, parents, and subscribers, as well as many of the children, could easily see the amount of skill, patience, and industry displayed in the articles exhibited. The following list of a few of the articles will show that there was a great variety of exhibits: Models of a Swiss cottage, farms, church, house, and village school; a workbox, an aquarium, a money-box, a mahogany tea-caddy, a cabinet with glass doors and drawers, paper picture-frames, a feather fan; plaster models of a vase and a snuff-box; straw picture-frames, mats made of strips of wood, a leather housewife, dressed dolls, gloves, articles of clothing of almost every kind, with specimens of needlework completed and in progress, including marking, darning, and stitching. Also specimens of writing and drawing. As an encouragement to the exhibitors, and as a reward of merit, thirty-four prizes of books, writing materials, work-boxes, &c., were awarded, and certificates of merit distributed.

King Edward Street, Mile End, in the Easter week held another industrial exhibition of work produced by the children of that school. Many of the articles displayed a degree of skill and finish that was very creditable to the exhibitors. Among the most noticeable of the articles were a gentleman's mahogany easy-chair, covered in leather; a lady's chair, covered in stripped rep; a dining-room chair, covered with horsehair; two footstools, one covered in rep, the other in leather; an extremely well-made oak couch covered in green leather. In tin-work was a vane, with well-formed letters for the cardinal points, with movable arrow; a tin box with lock and key. A wax doll, the face, arms, and legs moulded by the exhibitor; models of blacksmith's shop; cottage made of cork; a country residence, in glass case; a working model, cleverly made to act for a quarter of an hour by means of sand. Specimens of chair-caning. Many specimens of writing and drawing. A great variety of needlework, both plain and fancy. Prizes were awarded to the most skilful, the value of which varied from 3s. to 5s. each.

THE COSTERMONGERS AND LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Golden Lane Ragged School.

Not the least of the valuable agencies connected with Golden Lane Ragged School is the "Costermongers' Club." Every Tuesday evening this industrious fraternity meet in a room placed at their disposal by the Committee; and though the costers manage their own affairs, and manage them well, yet our friend Mr. W. J. Orsman is always present to give advice when requested.

As one means not only winning their confidence, but to help them to help themselves, a Barrow and *Donkey* Club was established some years ago. Not before it was wanted; for it may not be generally known that most of the barrows formerly seen in the streets were hired of "barrow-farmers." Though it is impossible for a costermonger to do without a barrow, yet not a man in twenty possesses one of his own. The regular "barrow farmers" charge a shilling a week for the loan of this humble vehicle—more if it is not a "constant hiring;" and in the latter case the hirer is supposed to do his own patching and painting, calling on the owner only when new wheels are required. There are men who have had the same barrow five, six, and even seven years. As a new barrow does not cost more than sixty shillings, it will be at once seen that barrow-farming on a large scale is anything but an unsafe or profitless speculation.

This state of things is happily put an end to by the managers of Golden Lane Ragged School. The barrowless costermonger pays in a shilling a week, and, to encourage him, a bonus on his savings of four shillings in the pound is paid him. Or, if he shows himself an honest man, and cannot spare the shilling in addition to the one he is already paying for hire, a friend may "stand security" for him, and in a few months the saved hiring shillings make the barrow his own property. Of the Costermongers' Club Lord Shaftesbury is not only president, but an enrolled member. His barrow, known by the coster fraternity as "The Earl," is lent to some "brother member" who is out of luck, and almost out of heart. Ornamented as this barrow is with Lord Shaftesbury's coronet and crest, it makes no slight sensation in "Hot Water Lane," "Little Cheapside," "Angel and Porter Court," and the other strangely-named alleys of this notorious district. We need scarcely say that the costers are not a little proud of their brother member; and, by various gifts, they have shown how much they appreciate that practical kindness which sympathises rather than patronises.

Thus, on March 24th ult., the annual meeting of the Costermongers' Society was held in the Foresters' Hall, Wilderness Row, where 400 of the brotherhood assembled. The hall was decorated with flags and bannerets, and the band of the Society played during tea.

Prior to the indoor proceedings, an exhibition of animals used by costermongers was held in the yard attached to the hall. Amongst them were two which attracted especial attention—viz., that which won the first prize at the Crystal Palace show, and that which in the course of the proceedings was to be presented to the Earl of Shaftesbury. All the animals appeared to be in capital condition.

When the meeting was assembled the Earl of Shaftesbury was in the chair, and on the platform were his daughters, Lady Jocelyn, Lady Templemore and Lady Edith Ashley, and the Right Hon. W. Cowper-Temple, M.P. Mr. Orsman read the annual report, which showed that at the rate of one penny a week the members had paid in during the year £183 15s. 5d., that the expenditure was £84 8s. 5d., and that £100 was in hand. 58,000 dinners had been given to children, and soup to a number which could not be counted.

Several speeches having been made, Mr. Carter, the secretary of the Society, amid loud cheers, led the donkey on the platform up to the chair, which the noble chairman at once vacated. The presentation was made in due form, and Lord Shaftesbury, with his right arm around the neck of the donkey, which he placed next the chair, returned thanks in a brief speech. He said he had no children now young enough to ride the donkey, which he should send into the country; but he had grandchildren who would ride it. He did not wish further ceremony in the matter than this—to hope that in the course of his life he had done his duty as donkeys generally did theirs—with unwavering patience and unmurmuring resignation to everything put upon them. (Loud cheers.) A costerwoman then presented Lady Edith Ashley with a beautiful bouquet. Lord Shaftesbury's donkey was led from the platform, down the stairs, and into the yard amid loud cheering. Mr. Cowper-Temple gave the meeting an earnest religious address, and then the meeting of costermongers broke up.

To show the sort of persons aided by this club, we cannot better close this sketch than by giving two or three speeches at their annual meeting. Lord Shaftesbury, as the chairman, being anxious to hear the costers speak for themselves, two of them did so. The first one was respectably dressed, and, having lost one leg, walked with crutches. It was some little time before he could be got into the right strain, for gratitude was uppermost in his mind. Whatever he commenced to say, he involuntarily drifted into an acknowledgment of the many

times the Earl had assisted him. After being repeatedly checked by his lordship, who sat close beside him, he said that twelve months ago he turned teetotaller, joined the club at the Mission, and is now the owner of a barrow and a donkey, and enabled to provide for his wife and six children. Another speaker, John Wilkins, was a pure specimen of the coster—in fact, he owned to having been born and bred a coster. He served his country for six years, and on being wounded in China was "turned up," and once more compelled to follow his calling. He said that he was not a teetotaller, but that he knew when he had had enough. The Society was first of all held at a public-house. The rules imposed a fine of one penny for swearing, and, said he, "we very soon got a £1 in the box; but we ain't got a 'bob' (shilling) all the time we've held it at the Mission." This, he contended, was not because the members were afraid of the penny fine, but there was a "summat." There were forty families of his name in the parish of St. Luke's, and not one of them had ever applied to the parish for relief, "which shows, mates, that they're not a lazy lot;" a statement which elicited sundry cries of "Brayvo, Jack!" "Wot the costers wanted was that when they went to market the top of what they bought should be the same as the bottom, just as when a gentleman goes to buy a suit o' clothes he gets the same stuff for his coat, an' weskit, an' trousers." Jack informed his hearers that excess in drink was an error against which his brother costermongers should guard themselves; but he admitted that he was not a total abstainer. Not that he cared for alcoholic stimulants—"bless yer, no, mates!"—but, like all ex-military men, he was "touched in the chest," and found "a drop of liquor" occasionally useful. He could, however, solemnly declare that he never exceeded the bounds of moderation, and he "wasn't a goin' to." "It wasn't good enough," and whenever he found that he had had sufficient of the cup that cheers and *does* inebriate, he "turned it up," and he recommended all his friends to do the same.

PEABODY BUILDINGS.

In our last number we (*ante*, p. 73) sketched the miserable dwellings of the poor, and gave an outline of the Government measure to provide healthier houses for the labouring classes. The most prominent effort in this direction—though for a higher section of working men—is that under the direction of the Peabody trustees. The following outline of their report for 1874 will show what they have effected, the total cost of building and management, and the percentage earned on the capital employed.

As stated in the last report, the amount of the fund on the 31st December, 1873, was £578,059 9s. 5d. To this sum has been added, for rents and interest on investments during the past year, £15,568 8s. 2d., making the total fund on the 31st of December last £593,627 17s. 7d.

During the year the trustees have spent in the purchase of land and the erection of buildings the sum of £80,223 7s. 3d., and the whole amount thus expended since the creation of the trusts has been £380,284 19s. 7d., leaving £213,342 18s. available for future operations. Two new blocks of buildings at Blackfriars, alluded to in the report for 1873, are now occupied by 44 families. The new buildings in Duke Street, Stamford Street, with accommodation for 352 families, are completed, and will be ready for occupation this month; and the six new blocks in East Lane, Bermondsey, for 72 families, will be opened during the summer. Before the close of the year the trustees will have accommodation for 1,376 families. Considerable progress has been made in the erection of 12 new blocks of buildings on the Southwark Street site, which will contain 264 separate tenements, but these will not be ready for occupation until 1876. The number of families in residence at the end of the year was 954, consisting of 3,815 individuals, an average of four persons to each family. The average weekly wage of the head of each family was £1 3s. 5d., varying from £1 0s. 6d. at Chelsea to £1 4s. 2d. at Spitalfields and Blackfriars. The average rent of each dwelling was 3s. 11d. per week, and that of each room 1s. 10d. No charge is made for water, and the weekly rent includes the use of bath-room and laundry. The net returns from all the buildings now opened show an income of £6,426 12s. 8d. per annum, being at the rate of 2¾ per cent. upon the capital expended.

If financially these Model Buildings are not very remunerative, yet morally and physically their value cannot be overestimated. This was clearly shown by a paper read by Mr. C. Gatliff before the Statistical Society. He quoted statistics to show the favourable hygienic conditions of the model houses. The death-rate, for instance, was 15 per 1,000, or 7 per 1,000 less than the most favourable figures for outside. An important fact has been elucidated in the erection of improved dwellings by the "Metropolitan Association," and that is, the small space which they occupy, even if we include the large courtyards left for recreation and ventilation. The average number of persons to the acre is at least four times more than in the most densely-populated parts of the metropolis. In Westminster there are 235 persons to the acre; in the dwelling sprovided by the Metropolitan Association, including in the areas the large courtyards and gardens attached, the average is 1,140. Yet of 156,732 superficial feet, only 74,620 are

covered by the dwellings, five, six, and seven stories high, the remaining 82,112 feet of surface being devoted to playgrounds and the purposes of ventilation. The ground rents paid by the association are 2d. per family per week in Spitalfields, and 1s. 6d. in Golden Square, Regent Street, but in the latter locality wages are higher, and people save in many ways by being near their work.

It is thus seen that, with spacious air-holes, and proper ventilating apparatus, overcrowded space is not incompatible with a high degree of health. In fact, give pure air and plenty of light, and the average death-rate falls as if by magic.

WHAT DID SHE COST?

At the meeting of the New York State Charities Aid Association, Dr. Harris brought forward some of the most remarkable statistics which have ever been obtained in the science of criminal reform. While reading of the efforts of the Prison Association, his attention was called to a county on the Upper Hudson, where there was a remarkable proportion of crime and poverty to the whole population. The county contained but one town besides small villages, with a population of some forty thousand; yet the number of paupers in its almshouse was four hundred and eighty, or about one in ten, not reckoning a considerable number assisted by outdoor relief. This proportion is greater than that of London or Paris.

The attention of the doctor was attracted to certain names which everywhere appeared in the criminal and poorhouse records of the county, and he was led to follow up the traces of certain families. These again seemed to be connected, and he was induced to search still further the genealogies of these families. The results will remain, as permanent and most startling facts, in the history of crime and its consequences. It should be understood that ordinarily it is extremely difficult to trace the descent of a criminal family. In cities such families become broken up, and their members are scattered everywhere. In villages, though their lines of descent may be followed, yet the retributive laws of Providence usually carry the effects of crime only to the third or fourth generation; and then the race comes to an end through physical and moral degeneration, the final members being commonly idiots, imbeciles, lunatics, and, in some countries, *crétins*.

It happened, however, in this county, that the physical vigour of the particular family traced, preserved some of its members for their

evil destiny, and enabled the investigator to trace them during six generations of wickedness and misery. Some seventy years ago a young girl named Margaret was left adrift in one of these villages —it does not appear whether through the crime or misfortune of others. There was no almshouse in the place; but she was a subject of outdoor relief, receiving occasionally food and clothing from the officials, but was never educated, and never kindly sheltered in a home. She became the mother of a long race of criminals and paupers, and her progeny has cursed the county ever since. The county records show *two hundred* of her descendants who have been criminals. In one single generation of her unhappy line there were twenty children; of these, three died in infancy, and seventeen survived to maturity. Of the seventeen, nine served in the State prisons for great crimes an aggregate term of fifty years, while the others were frequent inmates of jails, penitentiaries, and almshouses! Of the nine hundred descendants, through six generations, from this unhappy girl who was left on the village streets and abandoned in her childhood, a great number have been idiots, imbeciles, drunkards, lunatics, paupers, and prostitutes; but 200 of the more vigorous are on record as criminals.

This neglected little child has thus cost the county authorities, in the effects she has transmitted, hundreds of thousands of dollars in the expense and care of criminals and paupers, besides the untold damage she has inflicted on property and public morals. When we think of the multitude of wretched beings she has left upon the earth; of the suffering, degradation, ignorance, and crime that one child has thus transmitted; of the evil she has caused to thousands of innocent families, and the loss to the community, we can all feebly appreciate the importance to the public of the care and religious training of a single little girl.

How many such little girls have been rescued and trained in Ragged Schools for the service of God and man who can tell? Thousands of such cases we *know*; and many thousands more now unknown will doubtless be revealed at the great Harvest day. Yet had but one such case rewarded our labours, we think, when we remember the case of Margaret, society deeply indebted to us for what we have saved it in the cost entailed by the repression of crime.

Hints for Teachers.

PLAINNESS OF LANGUAGE.

THE highest happiness of a good Ragged School teacher, arising from that office, will always be derived from witnessing evidence of the early conversion of his scholars, and proof, in their growing goodness, that his work is successful. Like St. John, he will say, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

But, besides this best enjoyment, there is another which leads to it, and which may be more or less ensured every Sunday. It is the pleasure to be derived from really teaching the scholars something which they did not know before, from making something plain, and intelligible to them, which till then was perplexing to them, or hidden from them; from putting something before them in a way to touch their feelings and awaken their interest, which before was without effect.

Without effort and painstaking, though, and these of a well-directed kind, this gratification cannot be enjoyed. Talking is not always teaching. What comes of what is said must very much depend on the way in which it is said,—on tone, on manner, on the *words used*, and on the adaptation of means taken to explain and enforce the topic on hand. Bishop Usher said, "It takes all our learning to make things plain." If this be true of the efforts of preachers to adults, how much more must it hold good in reference to teachers whose listeners are children. All that they can learn as to the meaning of Scripture; all that they can gather by way of illustrating it; all practical hints which they can appropriate for catching attention, and for enabling juveniles to "take hold of instruction,"—they will need in order to ensure much of that enjoyment of which we have spoken. Foremost among requisites for this is simplicity of style and language.

Any one who wishes to be a thoroughly successful Ragged School teacher must aim at plainness of speech. For efficient no one can be who is not able to talk about truth in such a way as will help little ones to see the meaning of those passages of Scripture which they are set to read.

What every teacher should aim at is, so by explanation, by illustration, and by application, to present the truth to his scholars that it shall be well fitted for the Holy Spirit's use in renewing their hearts and regulating their lives. But truth can have no influence upon a hearer if it be told in words which he does not understand. It must first be made clear to his mind, if it is to affect his heart, or rouse his conscience, or rule his behaviour. If teachers desire to be forceful, let them aim to be simple.

Among other excellent remarks on this subject, Dr. Steel says:—"A plain style is the most successful method of imparting knowledge to mankind. The ablest preachers and teachers have been distinguished for their simplicity. Variety may make men write learnedly. Piety only will lead the learned to be simple. This was Luther's way. His style was simple, popular, and did great good. He used this in his discourses, in his hymns, in his Catechism, and in his

wonderful translation of the Scriptures, which were for people at large. Hence his words bore the light of heaven into the darkened minds of the fatherland, interested old and young, and made the people familiar with the truth of God." Quintilian, the ancient Roman writer, remark that our meaning in words of instruction, "like the sun, should obtrude itself upon the eyes of the ignorant, not only without any pains to search for it, but, as it were, whether he will or not." Dr. South, in one of his terse and weighty sentences, said, "He is the powerfullest preacher, and the best orator, who can make himself best understood." Archbishop Tillotson, a prince of sacred orators of his day, used to read his sermons to an illiterate old woman of plain sense, who lived with him; and, if any words were not intelligible to her, he altered them before he preached the discourse to the congregation. Baxter practised great simplicity. The account which he gives of his style is very interesting. After enumerating several circumstances that conspired to make his style plain, he adds, "I think that all these are partly causes, but I am sure the principal cause is a long custom of studying how to speak and write in the keenest manner to the common, ignorant, and ungodly people; without which keenness to them, no sermon nor book does much good, which has so habituated me to it, that I am falling into the same with others. . . . . And I have a strong natural inclination to speak of every subject just as it is, and to call a spade a spade, and to fit words to subjects, so as that the thing spoken of may be fullest known by the words, which, methinks, is part of our speaking truly."

Teachers in Ragged Schools are much more required to be simple, since they teach the young, whose knowledge of words is small, and whose minds are yet unused to learned phrases. Be plain then in language. Give a clear view of what you teach. However small a lesson you may give, let it be made plain to the young minds of your scholars. Especially when showing the way of salvation, tell the story of Calvary in such simple words that a mere infant can make no mistake.

Children's Page.

MAGGIE AND HER MOTHER.

A POOR little Irish ragged girl applied for admission into the Ragged School at G——, and was received. Here Maggie Donovan learned to read and sew, and was rather a promising scholar.

One day she refused to read the Bible, saying, "My mother bade me not read it."

The teacher then said, "Tell your mother the Bible will do you no harm, but will make you 'wise unto salvation;' and the rules of the school, which must be observed, require that every scholar able to read should read the Word of God."

The mother, who was a Roman Catholic, unwilling to deprive her child of the industrial training she was receiving, at length consented, and her little girl read the Bible daily, and committed portions of it to memory. With motherly anxiety for the welfare of her child, she resolved to keep a strict watch on what she learned, and counteract at home any influence of the Ragged School. For this purpose she made her evening after evening repeat the lessons she was taught, and questioned her regarding them.

One day she heard of Christ's conversation with the woman of Samaria; another of his discourse with Nicodemus; another of his love for the family of Bethany, of his sympathy with Mary and Martha on the death of their brother Lazarus, and of his raising him from the dead. Again, she heard of the full and free forgiveness of the repentant sinner, while the proud and the self-satisfied Pharisee was reproved. There was nothing against the Virgin, the Pope, or her Church, in all this. As she had never heard these things before, they had all the charm of novelty, and, with a power peculiar to the Scriptures, commended themselves to her mind and heart.

After some time Maggie was regularly absent from school. What had become of her? One evening a gentle knock was heard at the teacher's house; the door was opened, and there stood, with bright eyes, little Maggie.

After a kind recognition, she said, "Please, ma'am, would you lend me a Bible?"

"What do you want with a Bible?" said Miss Groves.

"I want," said the little girl, "to read it to my mother. She is sick now, and I cannot come to school. I used to tell her all my lessons every day. I have told them over and over again, and now she wants the Book of which she has heard so much."

The Bible was willingly given. The teacher visited the poor sick woman, and often found her little scholar reading the Word of God to her dying mother.

Mrs. Donovan departed this life giving bright evidence that she received and rested on Christ, and him alone, for her salvation. No earthly priest attended her deathbed, and her anointing was that of the Holy Spirit.

Soon after, the health of the little motherless girl began to decline. Her form was more slight, her steps were more feeble and less buoyant, than those of her little companions. Unable to keep pace with them, she returned from the Ragged School alone—yet not alone, for she had been brought to know Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Though her outward man was perishing she grew in the knowledge of Christ from day to day, and in a little while her spirit departed to be with the Lord.

Thus the mother and daughter bear witness that the Word of God makes wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. And all this came from a poor little Irish girl attending a Ragged School.

E.

Ragged School Union.

The monthly meeting of the Managing Committee was held on April 9th ult. The contributions for March were reported to be £233 16s. 7d.; and the payments to be £201 4s. 2d.

Quarterly grants amounting to £98 13s. 4d. were ordered to be paid to nineteen schools. The repayment of fourteen donations received for seven schools, &c., was ordered. Other payments amounted to £183 10s. 2d.

Grants voted to Tottenham Square towards clearing off debt, £15.

To Chequer Alley Mission £25, towards paying off debt.

To Lancaster Street School £15, towards paying off debt.

Grants voted also to Carr Street School, St. James's Place School, Brownlow Street School, Dove Row School; £20 paid to Maida Hill School to clear off debt.

Applications for aid received from Shadwell Station School, Fell Street School, Horseferry Road School, and John Street School, Homerton stood over.

The leave of absence given to Mr. Hytche in January, in consequence of illness, having expired, a letter was received from him stating his health to be still unsatisfactory, and pressing the acceptance of his resignation as the Senior School Agent, which was accepted.

The Secretary read his draft Report of the Society, which, on revision, was adopted, and it was agreed to submit it to the Annual Meeting on May 10.

Thanks were voted to the Secretary for the care and attention in drawing up the Report.

The Sub-Committee's Report on Night Schools was finally considered and adopted.

Mr. Minton, of the firm of Messrs. Minton, Boyes, and Child, was appointed Auditor.

Facts and Scraps.

Fox Court, Gray's Inn Road.—Last October three Special Children's Services were held in this Ragged School on consecutive evenings, when large numbers of scholars attended. These meetings have led to the formation of a "Children's Mission Band." Thirteen are banded together as little missionaries to their schoolfellows, and to the young in

the factories where they are employed.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.—Amongst many recent donations to this Ragged School is one of £50 from the Goldsmiths' Company.

GRAY'S YARD, OXFORD STREET.—As one means of counteracting the Thieves' Literature, so widely circulated among children, this Ragged School has a large circulating library. To this library, we are glad to report, the Sunday School Union recently voted a donation of £10. In aid of this Ragged School a service of song, entitled, "The Prodigal Son," was held at Seymour Hall on Monday, 5th April. The chair was occupied by G. Hanbury, Esq., and the connective portions were read by the Rev. Canon Wright. The pieces were sung by a choir of school-children, and the subject was illustrated by some well executed dissolving views. The proceeds of the service were devoted to a fund for the purchase of a new harmonium for the Ragged Church and School.

KINGSLAND.—In order to enable the teachers of this Ragged School to extend their library, the Sunday School Union have voted a grant of £3.

LANCASTER STREET, BOROUGH ROAD.—We deeply regret to announce the death of Mr. Robert Potts, the excellent master of this night school, at the advanced age of seventy-two. Mr. and Mrs. Potts, true yoke-fellows in this and every good work, have aided our movement for above twenty years. First at Whitechapel, where they acted as earnest and able volunteers, until vicissitudes in their circumstances led to their becoming paid teachers at Lant Street, and then at Lancaster Street Ragged Schools. Though the health of Mr. Potts had been gradually failing for some time, yet to the last he kept to a work to which he had successfully devoted his best energies, and so died, as he wished, in harness.

MANCHESTER BOYS' INDUSTRIAL HOME.—This useful institution has just completed the fifth year of its labours, with many encouraging tokens of success. A workshop, with steam-power, dining-room, schoolroom, and gymnasium, are in course of erection, at a cost of about £1,600. Many of the boys, rescued from the temptation of the streets, are now filling respectable situations in life, some on board the training-ship, others growing up in safe homes in Canada, or the United States, while the majority are retained at home, to train for honest labour there.

CAB-DRIVERS.—The directors of the Alexandra Palace Company intend to hold, in the ensuing season, at the Park, an Exhibition of Cab Horses and Cabs, and to appropriate the sum of £200 to be distributed in prizes for cabs in the best condition, and to drivers who have been longest in the employment of one master, and who have never been charged with cruelty to their horses, reckless driving, drunkenness, insolence, or other offences. [We are glad to intimate that a few Christian cab-drivers are earnest Ragged School teachers.]

FACTORY ACT.—The Act passed in the last session to improve the health of women, young persons, and children employed in factories, and the education of such children, has just come into operation. The period of employment is to be either from six to six, or from seven to seven o'clock; the employment not

to be continuously longer than four hours and a half without half an hour for a meal, except on Saturdays, when the employment is not to be beyond half-past one o'clock. Two hours each day, save on Saturday, to be allowed for meals, and one hour before three o'clock. There are provisions in the new Act as to education and school attendance. Employment during meal time is strictly prohibited.

PROTESTANTISM AT ROME.—At Rome, Protestantism, or rather primitive Christianity, now numbers more than forty places of worship, open every Sunday and several times a week. A Scripture Readers' Association has just been formed for reading the Bible from house to house. Formerly, in the city of the Pope, one could no more than give the Bible; now it is sold, at a very low price certainly, but enough to prove that those who buy it have the desire and intention of reading it. To most of these centres of gospel light Mission or Ragged Schools are attached.

Notices of Meetings.

FOX COURT, GRAY'S INN ROAD.

The great event of the year is the "Parents' Winter Treat," for which purpose the Benchers of Gray's Inn have for several years past kindly granted the use of their beautiful hall. Three hundred of the fathers and mothers of the children attending the Fox Court Ragged School sat down on March 10th to what is called a "meat tea"—which was certainly a most substantial repast, the arrangements made by Mr. Thomas Fagg, the honorary secretary, and those associated with him for this particular purpose, having been made on the most liberal basis.

They listened, too, with marked interest to the addresses delivered at the meeting which took place, under the chairmanship of Lord Shaftesbury. They were addressed by Mr. Curtis, who dwelt on the importance of the parents co-operating with the teachers in bringing up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, adding that all who were engaged in carrying out the various objects of that institution were actuated by a common desire to serve their God and bless their generation. The Rev. J. H. Moran referred to the twenty-one agencies in connection with this school, for the physical, temporal, moral, and spiritual benefit of a large number of the community the main effort being the religious instruction of the young. He asserted that this was a work which no School Board could ever undertake or carry out, and bore tribute to the unwearying exertions of Lord Shaftesbury, and those engaged under his leadership in the Ragged School movement during past years, while others were asleep, on the question of popular education, and by which "thousands of poor children had been brought to Christ, and had become as shining lights in dark places." The Rev. Mr. Taylor, chaplain of Gray's Inn, reminded his hearers that some of the distinguished judges, jurists, and others, whose portraits adorned its walls, had sprung from an origin as humble as that of any of the children in those schools; and the

Rev. Mr. Strickland tendered some wholesome advice to the parents on the duties of home-life. Mr. A. Rawlinson mentioned, in proof of the secular good that was being done by the institution, that a large employer of labour in the neighbourhood, who was quite unaware of his connection with the school, told him that he had observed a marked improvement in his workmen, which he attributed to the training they had received in Fox Court Ragged School.

SERMON LANE, ISLINGTON.

The annual meeting of the Sermon Lane Mission was held at Myddelton Hall, under the presidency of Mr. J. Surr.

Mr. D. Cooksey (the secretary) read the report as follows: — The past year opened with some anxiety, through the heavy debt to which they were liable. Their long-tried and constant helper, the Ragged School Union, having liberally promised to contribute £30 when the remainder of the debt had been raised, an earnest effort was put forth to obtain the amount, which was successful through the liberality of friends and the lectures at Myddelton Hall. On Sunday evening a school composed of very rough elements numbers in the winter from 120 to 140. Free Sunday Morning Breakfasts have been continued during the months of January, February, March, November, and December to the usual indigent class, and were numerously attended, sometimes 200, and never less than 150, being present. Their woe-begone and pinched appearance is painful to contemplate, and doubtless with most a sad tale could be told—opportunities neglected, duties avoided, and evil habits contracted; but it is hoped the very misery of their condition may open their hearts to the tones of love and mercy. Tract distribution is conducted by eighteen visitors, attenders of the mission, and about 300 tracts are exchanged weekly. Finding, during these visits, many cases of distress, and feeling the need of some means of their own to meet them, these friends established a small fund by contributions of 2d. per week, and have thus raised £3 12s. 10d., and expended £2 5s. 6d., the highest amount given being 1s. to each case. Home visitation has been energetically carried on during the year, and hundreds of families have been visited and invited to the meetings. Cases of sickness and distress thus discovered are relieved, and help has been given in 134 instances in the form of coals, tea and sugar, beef-tea, or money. A club is established to encourage thrift and enable the poor people to purchase at a cheap rate articles of clothing; the number of members is 56. Amount subscribed during the year, £18 18s. 6d., which is supplemented by a small grant from the mission funds. The Maternity Society, during the time it has been established, has assisted in 27 cases. The Girls' Sewing Class meets on Monday evenings. The number of members is 75; the average attending is 20. The Mothers' Meeting has been carried on for 24 years; 35 are on the books, with an average attendance of 25. These pay in as they can afford for clothing, coals, and any other article of domestic use. The Penny Bank exceeded, in number of depositors and amount of cash, any previous year. Cash received, £283; paid out, £260; number of accounts open, 691.

PRESENT ASPECT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL MOVEMENT.

It is customary for commercial firms to "take stock" at Christmas, not only to learn whether the receipts have exceeded the expenses, but in order to learn from the unsold stock what staple has gone out of fashion. In like manner, all philanthropic and religious societies balance their books once in the year, and thereby learn their true financial condition, and whether the object which taxes their energies has progressed or retrograded. The results, as tabulated in a report, are usually presented at what are known as "the May meetings." The 31st Annual Report of the Ragged School Union was presented at a crowded meeting held on May 10th ult.

All who have watched the Ragged School movement from the outset—and the new list of officers of the Central Society includes names which appeared in its first Report—know that the affiliated schools are passing through a painful crisis which renders their future uncertain. It was foreseen that when the London School Board came into active operation our work as secular educationalists would gradually diminish; for what with the public purse at their control, and their power of removing children from schools which did not reach the government standard, they would have an influence with which the poorer Ragged Day Schools at least could not compete. That this forecast was correct one fact will fully prove. In the year 1871 there were 22,839 *day* scholars; but in February last this large number had dwindled to 6,959, and there is every prospect that this small number will be still further reduced in the year on which we have entered.

Happily, so far as our *social* agencies are concerned, we are glad to say that Ragged Schools have made further inroads on the paganism—as dense and as frightful as in Central Africa—which disgraces our land. The value of the social and religious agencies under the supervision of the Central Society will be inferred when it is intimated that, apart from Day or Night Schools, about 800 operations are conducted by the connected schools.

Again, that the Christian zeal which first placed Ragged Schools in the foremost ranks of philanthropic societies has not abated, is shown by the fact that 83 new operations were commenced by old institutions last year.

Large as is the machinery of the London Ragged Schools, the population embraced is equally striking. For there are 25,709 Sunday scholars, and 5,400 adults in regular attendance at Ragged Churches. If to this were added the number of adults who attend Mothers' Meetings, or who are depositors in our Penny Banks, we should show a united population exceeding the capitals of most of the minor German princedoms.

Not the least pleasing of the past year's extensions are those Children's Services commonly known by the name of the "Children's Church." They were first noticed in the Annual Report for 1872, when 43 were reported, with 3,414 little worshippers. Now we are glad to record there are 64 such congregations, with an average attendance of 5,176. Among the many reasons which recommend these juvenile services, one may be indicated—namely, that they serve to initiate children into the usual forms of public worship, and that by a service specially adapted to their age and modes of thought. But more even than this, we have heard of many cases where boys and girls have been led by the Holy Spirit to find rest in Jesus, of whose conversion we have no more doubt than we have of that of King Josiah.

Of the 83 new operations, all but seven were either social or religious. This tallies with the progress reported in 1874, when, out of 90 new agencies, 72 were of a spiritual or social character. Though the Committee of the Ragged School Union are making strenuous efforts to improve and increase the number of Night Schools for "Roughs" of both sexes above the school age, as well as for the benefit of youths who, from their scanty earnings, may be said to live from "hand to mouth" (see post 125)—yet it is probable that if Ragged Schools are to continue their career of usefulness, their vocation will mainly be that of evangelists and socialisers. For such arduous labour there is unhappily even now as great a call as when Ragged Schools first sprang into vigorous life. In fact, as education necessarily, from the requirements of the Government, becomes more and more secular in tone, the sphere of Ragged Schools will gradually widen. For whilst the province of Board Schools is to initiate into the "three R's,"

reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic, ours is to teach the fourth R, namely, *R*-eligion. But, unhappily, with all our efforts, thousands have eluded our grasp who are growing up a curse to themselves and a terror to society. It is from these outsiders that the ranks of our wife-beaters, drunkards, and criminals are mainly recruited; and we need scarcely say that the growth of such classes—steeped to the lips as they are in godlessness and misery—can never be checked by that mere secular education which appeals to the head rather than to the heart. Christians may slumber while Satan is busy—or they may sit comfortably in their pews in selfish ease and isolation—but let them not forget that, if the penalty of this great social crime is not paid in this world, the time will come when the more solemn charge will be uttered, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground!"

But if the work of Ragged Schools is to be as vigorous as heretofore, much more if the outsiders are to come under their care, it is scarcely needful to add that though there are 2,614 voluntary teachers, a much larger staff will be required. Death, removals, and the "wear and tear" which have caused so many of the pioneers to succumb, have very much thinned our ranks during the last five years. This, of course, has had a reflex influence in reducing the number of our scholars, for of what use is it to invite fresh scholars if the staff is insufficient to manage them? If the falling off in numbers we deprecate sprang from our work being accomplished it would be a subject of gratitude rather than of regret. But, unhappily, our work as missionaries to the outcast and lawless classes is not, and has no signs of being, done. Thousands of boys and girls elude our efforts who are almost as stained with vice or crime as the degraded culprits of Portland Isle. These only wait for teachers—energised by the Spirit, and impelled by the love of Christ who saved them—to be gathered into Ragged Schools, many of whom would at last find in heaven a home and a hearty welcome. We do hope, in order to disprove the sneer of the worldling that the work of the two American revivalists will end in mere animal excitement—that hundreds of converts will proffer their services to Ragged Schools; all remembering that one of the new commandments of our Lord's was this—Feed my *Lambs!*

OUTLINE OF THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

THE year has not been without the anxieties incident to the transition period brought about by the passing of the Elementary Education Act, 1870. It was seen that that Act would in time bring the children of the poor into rate-supported schools, and thereby supersede the Day Schools affiliated to this Society. At the time of presenting the last report there were Day Schools conducted in 72 buildings, with an average attendance of 10,018 scholars; but from the returns recently made to the Parent Committee the number is now reduced to 57 buildings in which Day Schools are conducted with 6,959 scholars in attendance. The Committee have no reason to believe that the children formerly cared for by them are not scholars elsewhere; and that they now pay a penny a week towards the cost of their education is no reflection on the Society for establishing and supporting Free Schools for neglected children when there was no legal power to compel attendance at school; when if such were brought into school at all they had to be drawn in by moral suasion, by kind treatment, by a careful study of their urgent necessities, and by supplying what was absolutely needed. There is, however, a very large number of migratory families, the inmates of common lodging-houses, and occupiers of single rooms in low neighbourhoods, the children of which can scarcely be brought within the training influence of the legally constituted school. That schools of a less pretentious character are needed in given localities the Committee fully believe, and have therefore encouraged their support. Such schools may be considered as merely tentative for a few years, and not to be incorporated with the recognised system of schools till they are found to be indispensable to fill the wide gap between the industrial school with board, lodging, clothing, and education, and the elementary school for secular instruction only.

There is another class of society about which the Committee have had some careful thought. It consists of children and young persons of the destitute and rough classes who are not in the habit of attending any school. In occupation they fill the lowest positions of the working population. Their earnings are scarcely enough to support them, and when out of employment they are soon reduced to penury and want. If they are to be brought under the influences of Christian teaching, it can only be by means of Night Schools, Sunday Schools and Services. A special Sub-Committee was appointed to consider the whole question, and to devise a scheme for meeting the necessities of this class. The Sub-Committee called in the assistance of local friends, and Lord Shaftesbury kindly gave them the benefit of his cousel. After several meetings for consultation, they prepared and presented their Report, and the resolutions which were passed by the Committee upon consideration of the Report were as follows:—

1. That in the opinion of the Committee a great necessity is shown to exist for Night Schools for the instruction of children and young persons of the destitute and rough classes of the Metropolis in the usual course of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in connection with religious teaching; so that scholars may be taught to read the Bible for themselves, and be

fitted to take responsible situations, for which a competent knowledge of reading, writing, and figures is essential.

2. That such schools will afford abundant scope in the future for the labours of this Society, which, in the opinion of the Committee, is the only body now in existence attempting or competent to deal with the question.
3. That in the opinion of the Committee the maintenance of existing, and the establishment of additional, Night Schools in the Metropolis for the instruction of children and young persons of the above mentioned classes in reading, writing, and arithmetic, in connection with religious teaching, and in addition to Sunday Schools, should be the special work of the Ragged School Union in the future.
4. That the attention of the Agents of the Society should in future be specially directed to the aiding of such schools where already existing, and the promoting of new schools in districts where they are needed.
5. That the Managers of Night Schools be recommended to pay salaries to teachers conducting such Schools at the following rates—viz., £10 to Masters per annum for each night in the week employed, and £8 to Mistresses per annum for each night in the week employed; and that the Committee, in addition to any special grants which the circumstances of each case may render expedient, do pay two-thirds of such salaries. But subject to the conditions that no Night School shall be entitled to any aid from this Society towards the salaries of a Master or Mistress which is not open at least one and a half hours per night, and has not an average attendance of at least twenty scholars, or which in the judgment of the School Agents is not in other respects efficiently conducted.
6. That the Managers of Night Schools be recommended to employ and to pay 1s. per night to a Doorkeeper in every case in which, in the opinion of the School Agents, his services are necessary to secure order outside the School, and that the Committee do pay two-thirds of such payments.
7. That where, in the opinion of the Agents of the Society, a Night School is efficiently conducted by Voluntary Teachers without the aid of a Master or Mistress, the Committee, in addition to any special grant which the circumstances of each case may render expedient, and the aid to be given towards a Doorkeeper, as mentioned in the last Resolution, do make an annual grant in aid of the yearly expenditure of such school not exceeding one half of a Master's salary at the rate mentioned in the 5th Resolution, but every grant shall be subject to the conditions mentioned in the same Resolution.
8. That the reception of a small fee from scholars shall not preclude a Night School from assistance from this Society should the Committee see special circumstances therein; but that the Committee shall have power to make special and annual grants, or either of them, to any such school, provided, upon consideration of all the circumstances, they are satisfied that the school is satisfactorily performing the work of instruction of children and young persons of the above-mentioned classes in secular and religious knowledge as above prescribed. Provided that schools receiving payment from their scholars shall not be affiliated with the Ragged School Union, although they may under special circumstances be allowed a grant.
9. That no annual grants shall be made to any school which does not provide education for boys and girls in reading, writing, and arithmetic at least two nights in the week.

The Committee have pleasure in reporting that during the past year 83 new efforts have been made.

The numbers of schools and scholars as per returns are:—146 School Buildings, in which are conducted 183 Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools, with an average attendance of 25,709 scholars; Day Schools are conducted in 57 buildings, with an average attendance of 6,959 scholars; Night Schools are conducted in 81 buildings, with an average attendance of 4,128 scholars.

The Day and Evening Teachers employed during the year were in number 219; that is, in Day Schools 111, in the Night Schools 89, and for Industrial purposes 19. These were aided by 193 Paid Monitors.

The great success that attended the Ragged School movement in past years was largely worked out by the mission efforts of a large body of men and women who, as voluntary teachers, have laboured well and long. It is gratifying to know that among these workers are persons from all the social grades of society. Although widely separate in social position, they work harmoniously together for the common good at the Master's bidding. According to the returns lately received there are 2,614 of these workers, with 1,802 in average attendance. As many as 185 of these volunteers were formerly scholars in Ragged Schools.

One great means of usefulness with senior scholars and junior teachers has been the Meetings for Prayer to which the elder scholars have been invited, to join the teachers. Returns have been made from 86 of these meetings, at which the average attendance at each gathering has been about 40 persons.

Another source of much spiritual good in the schools is the Special Bible Classes. Particulars of 49 of these have been reported, the attendances at which were nearly 2,000, or an average attendance of 24. One result of these means has been that from 38 schools 178 youths of both sexes have identified themselves with one or other of the evangelical churches.

Children's Religious Services during the last year have increased from 41 to 64, and the attendance at them increased from 2,750 to 5,176. The average attendance has also increased from 67 to 80.

Ragged Churches for men and women have the same object for adults as Children's Services have for juveniles. In 49 of these Ragged Churches the total attendance has been 5,399, or an average at each gathering of 110.

The Committee have continued to supply Bibles for scholars at a reduced price on the charge made by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Up to the present time 39,928 copies of the complete Bible have been supplied. The number sold last year was 480.

The scholars in 75 schools have the benefit of Lending Libraries, in which there are 17,768 volumes for home reading. These largely supersede trashy literature, and furnish healthy occupation for leisure hours. In addition to which many of the schools supply large numbers of the weekly and monthly magazines.

The number of scholars placed in situations during last year by the 57 schools that reported on this result of useful effort was 1,179.

The present is the twenty-second annual distribution of Scholars' Prizes. The number distributed on this occasion is 586, of which 292 are to boys and

294 to girls. To all who come up more than the first time will be given a book with the card. To the girls is given an illustrated copy of John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with an introductory notice of the author by Rev. W. Landels, D.D., and with sixty coloured engravings. To the boys is given an illustrated copy of John Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," with forty-two coloured plates.

In the previous year's Report there were 17,416 depositors in 71 Banks, but last year there were 24,720 in 76 Banks. In the previous year the deposits amounted to £9,981 14s. 4d., but last year they were £13,140 10s. 10d.

Mothers' Meetings continue to be usefully conducted in 92 schools, from 71 of which reports have been received, stating the attendance to be 3,045, or more than 41 at each.

The Infant Nursery is a boon of great value, for by it the mother is not only set at liberty to work, but, in addition, the elder child is not required as a nurse in school hours, and is therefore free to attend school.

In connection with both parents and children the Clothing Club has been carried on in 56 schools, in 46 of which the deposits paid in amounted to £874 5s. 3d. during the last year.

In addition to the Clothing Club, in some of the schools Shoe Clubs are most usefully conducted. The members are by their means enabled to obtain boots at two-thirds of the cost price. There are also conducted Coal Clubs, from one of which 60 tons of good coal were supplied to the needy poor at wholesale price.

The Weekly Dinner has been continued in a large proportion of the schools, in some cases by separate funds, but mostly by the funds supplied by the Destitute Children's Dinners Society.

In 44 schools Bands of Hope are conducted, 34 of which have made returns, showing the number of members in the 34 Bands to be 3,603, or an average of 100 for each.

The benefit of the Rest for Weary Workers was, during last summer, enjoyed by twenty-eight teachers. As in former years, the expense of board and lodging was paid out of a small fund raised specially for the purpose.

The Parent Committee last summer again gave an invitation to the masters and mistresses to spend a day in the country. About 200 were able to accept the invitation. The day was fixed for Saturday, July 11th. The Children's Excursion was on Friday, July 17th. About 1,200 children, under the control of about 100 friends, were taken by special trains to Teddington for Bushey Park.

The Shoeblacks have pursued their work in the usual way, and with the success that has marked their course for twenty-four years. The average number of boys employed by the nine brigades was 368, and their total earnings for the year were £1,101 13s. 1d.

Last year the two School Agents paid 1,544 visits, and examined 4,951 Day Scholars, all of whom had attained six years.

The Balance Sheet of the Parent Society shows the receipts of the year to have been £3,779 16s. 10d., including legacies amounting to £224 12s. 7d., and the sale of magazines, &c., £80 8s. 6d. The expenditure side shows the amount of grants and other helps to the schools to be £2,981 0s. 2d., the Magazines to £221 14s., and the general expenses to £736 14s. 6d., making

the total payments £3,939 8s. 8d. The auditors' foot-note will show that the Society is possessed of a surplus fund which has been the result of legacies.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

HELD AT EXETER HALL, ON MONDAY EVENING, MAY 10*th*, 1875.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESCURY PRESIDED.

THE noble President was supported by the Vice-Presidents, Sir R. W. Carden and Mr. W. Locke, and the Committee. Also by Bishop Piers Claughton, Sir C. Rawlinson; Revs. Dr. Binney, W. Cadman, Gordon Calthrop, J. Fleming, and W. A. Hulbert; Lady Rawlinson, Miss Ada Leigh (Paris), Col. Sandwith, &c., &c.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. Gordon Calthrop, and by singing the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesu's name."

As at the two last annual meetings, the prizes given for good service were publicly received. The meeting was enlivened by the prize scholars singing several pieces under the direction of Mr. J. Proudman.

Mr. J. G. Gent read an outline of the Report for the past year.

The reading of the Report was followed by the children singing the hymn called "Forget and Forgive," which they did with a plaintiveness that was exceedingly impressive, and that headed "Try and He'll help you."

The CHAIRMAN then distributed the prizes, which were handed by his lordship to the teachers or one of the managers of the school to which the prize winners belonged. Each of the recipients passed in succession in front of the platform for the purpose of receiving the packet of books. The scene during the presentation was very animated, and the inconvenient bulk of some of the packages, notably that carried off by Sir Robert Carden, created some amusement as the bearer carried off what he was entrusted with. The name of each school represented was displayed to the meeting, while the prizes connected with it were being delivered by the Noble Earl in the chair. The children then sang "The Postman," commencing "Number 1, rat tat; number 2, rat tat."

The REV. GORDON CALTHROP then addressed the children. He said:—When I have to make a speech, I always like to begin by saying something pleasant, and therefore I will begin now, my young friends, by telling you how I myself, and the people in the hall, have been delighted by your singing, and I wish to offer you our very sincere thanks for the songs which you have already given us.

And now, having said that, I want to ask you a question. I find on looking over a paper which has been put in my hand that the "children" are to sing, and that there is then to be an address to the "children." I have not the very best pair of eyes in the world, and can't see very long distances; but, unless I am very greatly deceived, amongst the great mass of young persons that I see before me, there are a great many

young women, are there not? and a great many young men also. Some of you are nearly one-and-twenty, are you not? (Two or three voices, "Yes.") There are some who have been five years in service, and there are some among the males, not exactly young men, who, I have no doubt, have for some time past been looking for the whisker that is beginning. There are some of you who can hardly be called "children," while a great many others are really children, as we can all see. Now I want to ask you all a question or two, and I hope that none of you will be offended if I speak to you as if you were all children. It may be a good thing for those of you who are eighteen, nineteen, or twenty years old to be addressed on this occasion for about ten minutes as if they were children; they certainly were so not very long ago. In thinking just now what I should say to you, my mind was struck with what you sang about "The Postman," and I thought to myself, "Well, I'll try and get them to listen to me this evening by speaking to them about an important letter which we have all received, a letter which has come down from our Father in heaven, and is addressed to every one of us; a letter with the contents of which all you young people have been made acquainted, more or less, in the different Ragged Schools from which you come." I am, my young friends, going to speak to you about the letter which is commonly called the Bible. Now, that is a rather long letter, I suppose many of you think. It is not too long, but exactly the right length. It was written at different times. The first book of the Bible was, I suppose, written between three and four thousand years ago, and the last book was written nearly two thousand years ago. The Bible was written by very many different people. Part of the Old Testament was written by a lawgiver. Who was that? (Several voices, "Moses.") Part of it was written by a king. Who was that? (Cries of "David.") Part of it was written by a gatherer of sycamore fruit. Who was that? (A pause.) That question is more difficult—it was Amos. Now we will go to the New Testament. Part of that was written by a fisherman. (A number of voices, "Peter.") Part of it was written by a doctor. Who was that? (One or two voices, "Luke.") Part of it was written by a tent-maker. Who was that? (Several voices, "Paul.") That is right. I am glad to see that you know something about the matter. Now, the Bible was not only written by very many different people, but those people lived at very different periods. And I want you to notice one very wonderful thing, that although the Bible was written by different persons and at different periods, yet these persons never contradict one another. They all say the same thing in different words; they all speak about the same person, that person being Jesus Christ. But although this book was written by different men living at different periods, yet we all believe what we read there, and if we did not believe it we should not be here. There would then be no Ragged Schools. Although it was written by different men at different periods, we believe that it was sent to us by God. It is, in fact, God's book; it contains a message from our Heavenly Father to every one of us; and let me say again, that if we did not believ

that it is God's book there would be no such thing as a Ragged School in England.

Well, I want, before I quit this part of the subject, just to tell you two little stories. I know that young people, or "children" at all events, like to hear stories, and I want to tell you two stories about two people who believed they knew this Book to be a letter from God. One of them was a negro who could neither read nor write. He was not a learned man; he could not quote Greek or Latin, and he knew nothing about Hebrew; but he knew the Bible to be the word of God from the effects which it had produced in his own heart. One day another man, who was not so much an educated man as a sharp man—another man asked him how he knew the Bible to be the Word of God? He said, "I know it in this way. I find that all the good people speak up for the Bible, calling it the Word of God and minding its precepts, and that all the bad people disregard it and call it bad names, and I know, therefore, that it must be the Word of God." That was a very good answer.

And now, my dear young friends, I want to ask you another question. If you have had a letter sent to you from heaven, what ought you to do with regard to it? Why, in the first place, you ought to pay it proper respect. There are all sorts of different letters in the world. There is one kind of letter asking for the taxes. That is a very inconvenient letter, is it not? when people have not got the money to pay with. A letter comes to people which is marked outside, "On the Queen's Service." Before opening it you might suppose that the Queen was sending for you to go to Buckingham Palace; but when you have opened the letter you find that it is a demand that you should pay the Queen some money. There is another kind of letter which I hope none of you young people or children will ever write. It is what they call an "anonymous letter." Do you know what that means? An anonymous letter is a letter without any name to it. I have sometimes received an anonymous letter. A person who wanted to say a nasty thing, or a disagreeable thing, has written a letter to me without signing his name, well knowing that he was saying something that he ought not to say. That was an anonymous letter. Sometimes when a man goes to a church and hears what he does not like, he writes a letter to which he does not put his name, and sends it to a newspaper in which it is printed. That is another kind of anonymous letter. Now, my dear young friends, don't you ever be guilty of such a mean, cowardly, un-English trick as to write an anonymous letter for the purpose of inflicting pain. If you have got anything to say that is disagreeable, and that you think should be said, go and say it like a man or like a woman. Don't write anonymous letters, though there are a great many people, both in London and in the country, who are continually doing so. Such conduct reminds me of a boy who, wanting to spite somebody, lurks securely in some dark place, and when the person whom he wishes to injure is passing by, catches hold of a handful of mud, shies it at him, and then runs away. That is a very un-English kind of thing to do; and I hope that among the many things which you have

learnt in a Ragged School is this, that you ought never to do anything so cowardly as to write an anonymous letter.

But now we will talk about the good kind of letters. Suppose that one of you received a letter from—well, now, from our noble Chairman. Suppose that one of you young people received a letter from the Earl of Shaftesbury. What would you do when you had got it? You would say, "Father, mother, the Earl has written me a letter, the Earl himself has written me a letter." You would go and show it to your brothers and sisters, and would say to them, "Here is a letter in the handwriting of the Earl of Shaftesbury." I know you would take very great care of that letter, and I dare say you would get it framed and glazed, and hang it up against the wall of your room. I feel quite certain that you would read that letter. You would not be guilty of such foolish conduct as to wrap it up in a piece of brown paper, tie a black ribbon round it, and then put it away on the shelf and never read it. Oh no, if the Earl were to send you a letter, you would be sure to read it, and if it were on an important subject you would read it again and again, until you thoroughly understood it. Now, when your Heavenly Father has sent you a letter from heaven it will not do, you know, merely to say, "I have got a very pretty Bible." It may have gilt letters outside, and beautiful print inside, but all that will be of no use unless you read it, and read it often. I would advise you all to get into the habit, if you have not done so already, of reading the Word of God every day, because it is a letter to you from your Father in Heaven. You must not suppose that you will not find some difficulties in reading that letter. There are difficulties which we cannot explain; but, on the other hand, there is a great deal that is very simple, and you should pray for the help of God's Spirit while you are reading the Bible. Let me here relate an anecdote. The late Dr. Chalmers, who was a very great Scotch minister, wrote a very bad hand. His writing was indeed so difficult to read, that scarcely anybody could make it out. He used to write very long letters to his father, the charge for letters in those days being fourpence or fivepence, and in some cases much more. Well, although Thomas Chalmers wrote many letters to his father, the father could not read what the son wrote. What, then, did the father do? He kept all his son's letters carefully treasured up, and when his son came to pay him a visit, he produced them, and said to him, 'Now, then, read them to me if you can." You see from that what an advantage it is in some cases to have the person who wrote letters with us to make them out. So, with regard to the difficulties which we meet with in reading the Word of God, is it not a great advantage that we have Him who wrote the letter to explain it to us—that we have for our Teacher the Holy Spirit, whose help is promised to all those who seek it?

Now let me say one word in conclusion. In speaking yesterday to a lot of children, I had got a nice white pocket-handkerchief, and I could show it to them to explain what I meant to say. The one which I have now is not white enough to be used in that way. It is perfectly possible to write on a white pocket-

handkerchief, so that no one will at first be able to discover the writing. That writing is done with what is called "invisible ink," and the letters cannot be read unless the handkerchief is held near the fire. What has before appeared to have nothing upon it is then seen to be covered with letters forming words, and the whole can be read easily. In like manner you should, when reading the Bible, seek the light and warmth which are shed upon it by the Holy Spirit; you should read it under the influence of that which comes from above, and if you do that you will, I am satisfied, be able to say with David, "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

The children then sang the hymn "Stand on the Rock," and after a short interval they gave the spirited song called "Doing Nothing."

The CHAIRMAN then said: My good friends, it will, I am sorry to say, be necessary for me to leave you almost immediately. At this time of the year the pressure of business is very severe, and I have a great deal to despatch before the close of the present week. But, before I go, let me offer you a word of congratulation and a word of advice.

It was once said of a very great man, that nothing in his life so much became him as the conclusion of it. Now, if this were to be the conclusion of all our efforts we should cease our operations while we had grand hopes of yet further benefits being conferred. And why should it be the conclusion? I know that we are beset on all sides by enemies, and that a thousand difficulties press upon us; but yet there is work to be done, and we are the people to do it. (Cheers.) I remember the old Duke of Wellington one day saying to me, while giving me an account of some of his great battles, "According to the rules of war, I was beaten in almost every one of those battles, and I ought to have retreated, but the rule with me was this, never to consider myself beaten as long as I could present a front to the enemy." That, my friends, is what you are to do, and it appears from the Report which has just been read that that is what you are doing. You are now asked to return to one of the first things connected with the commencement of this movement—namely, the institution of Night Schools. You see the Board Schools pressing upon you, and I believe you will find it impossible to withstand their onset. They will drive you down into the lowest recesses of human life, with which alone we had to deal at the origin of this movement, and I venture to say that they will not follow you there. (Cheers.) Observe that there is an entirely new feature in this system of popular education. What means all this declamation about compulsory education? What means this complaint that children do not attend school unless the parents are brought before the magistrates and fined because the children have not attended? Under the old system connected with this movement, the great difficulty was that our places were not capacious enough to receive those who sought admission. The children were so attached to their teachers that there was great difficulty in clearing the room after school hours, and that arose from the system pursued—from the kind of teaching which was adopted. The whole management of the school, from first to last, was thoroughly parental,

from the time when you took the children under your care up to the time when they were placed in service and received a prize. As long, indeed, as the children were within the ken and reach of their teachers they were under this kind of system, and even up to manhood or womanhood they were the subjects of the fostering care and the keen and sagacious eye of those who had undertaken the charge of their temporal and eternal welfare. That system went to the very hearts of the children, and did not deal with the mere surface. On the other hand, the children who go to the Board Schools may be taught a great deal about the interior of Africa, but they know little or nothing about the interior of the Bible, and children want this kind of knowledge both for instruction and for consolation. The system which has been adopted in the Board Schools is one which will never win the heart of the people. It is a system which will never meet the case of the most wretched, and drag them out of darkness into light; it will never teach them to discharge their duty to God and man amid the perilous temptations of life.

I am satisfied that the system which you have adopted is the only one whereby you can raise numbers of children from the depth and degradation of misery into which they have fallen—depths which have never yet been thoroughly fathomed. Perhaps it is a good thing in some respects that you are relieved from the responsibility and care of many of the day schools, so that you may devote yourselves more exclusively to the care of those who, notwithstanding that our utmost efforts have been put forth, have not yet been brought within the scope of Christian teaching and Christian care. I much regret that the day schools under the Board have not that Divine power in them which have animated other schools. Nevertheless, we must conform to the necessities of the times. The day schools are passing from among us. This year we have only about 7,000 children within our walls, whereas two years ago the numbers were 23,000; and probably a large proportion of the 7,000 will be taken from us in the course of the ensuing year. Still, there is a work to be done, and I call upon you to do it so long as you have breath, so long as you have life, so long as you have strength, and so long as God impresses on your mind a deep conviction of your responsibility in this matter. I call upon you not to withdraw your assistance from the Ragged School Union at a time when it is undertaking a great and novel work. I am satisfied that this is the only mode in which we can approach those degraded and miserable classes who are half-starved and half-clothed, never washed, never cared for, presenting in their outward appearance everything that is calculated to disgust and to offend the senses. These will not be taken up by the dandies of the School Boards. (Laughter.) It is not to them that you can look for assistance when you dive into the lowest recesses of degradation and misery, and drag these children out of the deepest darkness that they may rejoice in the light and life and liberty of the Gospel. And yet let me tell you that there is more in the way of hope and in the way of assurance to be found among children of this class than in almost any other rank

in life. Hopeless, indeed! Why, if there were the time, I might mention many instances which clearly prove the contrary. There was my friend "Punch." "Punch" had been a source of annoyance to almost the whole of the workhouses of the metropolis. He went from casual ward to casual ward "prigging" the clothes—that is the right word—and showing himself altogether one of the most abandoned scamps in London. At last he came to the Refuge in Great Queen Street. Seeing him there, I said to him, "'Punch,' how can you go on in such a way as this? You have got some good about you; you have good abilities, and you have strength; shall we make a man of you, 'Punch'?" "Punch" replied, "Well, I don't mind if you do." Well, we set about trying, and by God's blessing we did make a man of him. Having been made a first-rate shoemaker, he went out to Natal, to carry on business there, and he is, I hope, carrying on business successfully, and maintaining the honourable character which he had when he left the Great Queen Street Refuge.

In going amongst poor children you call forth a sentiment which is almost unknown in their hearts; you evoke a feeling which is new to them, trained as they have been amid filth and misery, and unkindness, and blasphemy. They never heard a gentle word from those around them; you go among them; you bring them into your schools; you treat them with a tenderness and care of which they previously knew nothing, and the past is dissolved in a moment. The power thus acquired by teachers over those whom they instruct is almost absolute; it is almost more than I like to see exercised by one human being who is responsible for all that he does over another. But you have that power, and, that being the case, it is your duty to employ it for the benefit of all who come within the range of your influence, and I must say that it is incumbent on you to do all you can to make them good subjects and members of society, and good Christians.

One more word, and I have finished. Do brace yourselves up, my friends, for a conflict. Set the School Board at defiance. You have to go into the depths of human misery, and you may depend upon it that if you invite them ever so much they will not follow you there, because those recesses do not afford any scope for the demonstration or the exaggeration of their powers. I hope that the movement which we are now inaugurating will, through the blessing of God, prove a means of educing good out of evil, and enable the Union still to carry on its work in a most efficient manner. Brace yourself up, I repeat, for the conflict. There is work to be done of the noblest kind, and if you do it God's blessing will rest upon you. (Cheers.)

The noble earl then retired from the room amid loud cheers, and he was succeeded in the chair by Sir Robert Carden.

Bishop PIERS CLAUGHTON moved the following resolution: "That the report of the Committee, as printed and distributed this evening, be adopted, and that the gentlemen whose names appear in the printed programme be the Committee for the year 1875-76." He said: My Christian friends, you know that there is a great deal of unbelief in the world. A great many people

say that they do not believe in the Bible. Well, perhaps they will allow some of us to have *our* unbelief. For I do not believe in the failure of any efforts to do good to our fellow-creatures, and especially do I not believe in the failure of such efforts as you, my friends, are making to benefit the poor children with whom you have been brought in contact. I know that it belongs to Christianity to take up, as it were, especially the cases of those departments of human nature which have been most neglected. I was once speaking to a Buddhist priest in Ceylon who had pointed out to me the vices and bad behaviour of some of my countrymen in that part of the world, and in doing so I observed that although such persons were nominal Christians, they were not real Christians, and did not follow the doctrines and practices of our religion. He replied, "Oh, I can quite understand that; we have our bad men too, but we never concern ourselves about the bad, we only care for the good." I said, "That is quite contrary to our religion; our chief concern is for the bad, and our great object is to bring them under the influence of the teachings of the Bible." Now I am not going to speak to you, my friends, about bad people or good people. We are all bad enough to require constantly to remember that it is only through the great mercy of God that we are saved, and may God grant that the efforts which are being made to bring others to a knowledge of Christ may not be in vain. The Ragged School movement is a movement which I have always regarded as a noble effort to benefit a most neglected part of the community, and the spectacle which we see on the platform this evening is a striking illustration of the remarkable success which has by God's blessing attended that effort. At first the difficulties of the work appeared insuperable, and great numbers of persons regarded the whole scheme as perfectly hopeless. There is, indeed, reason to believe that a great deal of rebuke and ridicule, if not a great deal of vituperation, was cast upon Lord Shaftesbury and those who were united with him in the management of this work; but I need not stay to prove to you that there was no ground for such opposition, and that a vast amount of success has resulted from the noble efforts which have been made in Ragged Schools and other agencies which have been carried on in connection with them. Not only have you trained and educated poor ragged children, but you have indirectly done a good missionary work among their parents and other adults. The children have talked to their parents and others about what they have heard there, and many have set an example which has proved most blessed in its influence. Let me mention, by way of illustration, something connected with India. There was once a dreadful visitation of cholera. Great numbers of persons were carried off by that awful malady. The wife of a heathen native had fallen a victim. His daughter, who had become a Christian, being afterwards attacked, he wanted her to give up Christianity, observing that she now perceived that her new God could not save her, and that perhaps the old gods would if she returned to her former religion. She replied, "Oh, father, I believed before that Christ was my Saviour, but I now *know* that He is. I am going to Him

now; I am ready and glad to die." She died, trusting in Jesus for salvation. And many other native Christians in the neighbourhood also died in the same faith. Some weeks after the death of that girl a man came to a missionary and said that he wished to be baptized, being persuaded of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Who was this man? Why, he was the father of the Christian girl to whom I have alluded. What he saw of his child's behaviour after she became a Christian, combined with what he heard from her lips while she was lying on her deathbed, convinced him of the truth of the Christian religion, and he was thus led to embrace it. Such was the power of the truth as uttered by the lips of a child in the far-off East. Is not that a strong proof of the good which is done indirectly by means of children when they are taught as children are taught in Ragged Schools? These are days in which there is a sad amount of unbelief and infidelity, if not atheism. I have just heard a story bearing on that subject which went at once to my heart, and which I will repeat to you. A Christian lady who is now on this platform (Miss Ada Leigh) has been for some time trying to do all the good that she could among the poor in Paris. She told me just now that there was one poor hardened sinner about whom she felt in utter despair. At last his heart was touched, and he was led to lead a new life. And what was it that led to that blessed change? Why, it was the hearing a number of children sing some simple Christian hymns. But there is something more in the story. Those children had been poor neglected children like those who are taught in Ragged Schools, and they had been recovered through the exertions of that lady and placed in a home. There it was that the words of those hymns sank into the man's heart. My friend Mr. Gordon Calthrop said something about unbelief in reference to the Bible. Let us try to get the truths of the Bible fixed deeply in our hearts, and then we shall be enabled to oppose in the right spirit all the evils that we meet with in the prosecution of our labours. Depend upon it that that is the best preparation for contending against both unbelief and false doctrine, and for fighting as good soldiers of the cross against "the world, the flesh, and the devil." One word more: I do not think we need be afraid of the Board Schools. It is quite true that, as Lord Shaftesbury has said, they have taken away a considerable number of our day scholars, but they cannot deprive us of our *Sunday* schools. Let the Board Schools do their best or their worst; when they have given children secular knowledge, we will give them the best knowledge of all—the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the riches to be found in a pure Gospel; we will tell them about that eternal home which the Saviour died to procure for them, and into which He will receive all who love and follow Him at the end of their career on earth.

The resolution having been carried, the children afterwards sang "Rest for the weary," and while they were doing so the collection was made. After the lapse of two or three minutes they also sang "Stitch, stitch, stitch."

The Rev. J. FLEMING moved the following resolution: "That this meeting approves of the intention to give special attention to the formation and support of the Night Schools

wherever needed, and that the following be added to the Rules of the Society—viz., 'That the reception of a small fee from scholars shall not preclude a night school from assistance from this Society, should the Committee see the necessity for it, and that the Committee shall have power to make special and annual grants, or either of them, to any such school, provided, upon the consideration of all the circumstances, they are satisfied that the school is satisfactorily performing the work of instruction of children and young persons of the destitute and rough classes of the metropolis in secular and religious knowledge. Provided that schools receiving payment from their scholars shall not be affiliated with the Ragged School Union, although they may, under special circumstances, be allowed a grant.'" He said: My Christian friends, I felt, while Mr. Gordon Calthrop was speaking to us, that he was giving us all, as it were, the keynote this evening by making us feel that we were one with the children around us. There is nothing better for us amid the stern duties of life than to be made to feel that we are children. Thomas Guthrie said that he never knew what it was to feel that he was growing old until one day when he had been preaching in London, he met two ladies as he was coming out of the church, and heard one of them say, "Here comes the poor old man." You may be sure, my friends, that it will be well for us all to feel, when the grey hairs are coming upon us, when the brow is getting wrinkled, and when the heart is, perhaps, scarred by the troubles of a chequered life, that, nevertheless, we are still the same in simplicity of heart and life. Did not our great Master tell us that unless we become as little children we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven? There is great encouragement in connection with the efforts which are made to benefit the young. Remedial measures are good, because, where they are adopted, there is a noble and a saving work; but preventive measures are far better than remedial ones. Preventive measures always seem to me to argue wisdom in those who adopt them, while remedial measures necessarily prove that there has been a previous want of wisdom somewhere. It is a grand thing to put out a fire, and to put it out as fast as we can, but it is not the part of wisdom to do anything to originate a fire; and so it appears to me that the kind of preventive work amongst the young which is being sanctioned this evening is the grandest work of all in connection with Ragged Schools. Children of an older growth often disparage the kind of work in which you are engaged, and say that the attempt which is made will break down; but you have before you a number of children whose minds have been bent and moulded by the grace of God and by the power of the Holy Spirit. In such a gathering as this I see grand preventive wisdom for the future. We could not do our work in connection with Ragged Schools if we did not remember that the young are the hope of old England. I could not do my work as a minister of the Gospel if I did not feel that grey hairs would come upon those among whom I was labouring, and look upon them as my own children; and I could not do my work in Sunday Schools, or anywhere, if I did not believe that

the young are the hope of my country. I feel this evening that none of us can turn prophets, and tell what shall be the future of the boys and girls who are assembled on the platform, or what a useful life many of them may lead. Think of such men as Galileo, and Pallissy, and Watts, and others to whom the world is indebted for so much that is useful and good.

But, my friends, for such a work as this we want your sympathies and your hearts. Fathers and mothers, what are you thus learning to do for such children as those on the platform? Oh! if all parents and ministers would but rise to a due sense of their responsibility, what a different world this might be! At present we see a verification of Goldsmith's words—

"How vast the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land."

I am glad to find from the resolution that there is to be introduced in connection with, though not in affiliation to, the work of this Union, schools which charge a small fee for education. That will, in one sense, bring new blood into the work in connection with the old blood with which there is associated the memory of such inestimable benefits. Let us do our best in this matter and leave the result to Almighty God. Ah, my friends, it is drink, strong drink, that kills the conscience of parents and takes the heart out of them. It is strong drink which, during the thirty-two years that this Union has been in existence has been making such numbers of poor children what they are, robbing the home and destroying both body and soul. As a minister of the Gospel I have been a total abstainer from strong drink for more than twelve years for the sake of others. I would not try to force this method of doing good upon any man, but if I were to abandon the principle of total abstinence I should abandon that which has been a very powerful agency for good among working men and women, and has conferred immense benefit upon them and their families. I rejoice to learn from the Report that there are "Bands of Hope" in connection with Ragged School work. I trust that God will abundantly bless every effort that is being made. Let us all feel in a great Christian gathering like this, three things—that the world can be made better, that the world shall be made better, and that the world will be better if we do our part. As good old Adam Clarke said, "we should all try to leave the world better than we found it;" but unless we have the love of Christ constraining our hearts, we shall make sorry work of it in anything that we may attempt to do. Let us "go about doing good" like our Divine Master; but if we do so our constraining motive must be the love of Christ. What was it that made Mrs. Fry go among the hardened and the lost in order to win them to Christ? What was it that caused Raikes to gather together poor children in the first Sunday School? What was it that caused John Howard to leave the comforts of an English home in order that he might strike off the fetters from prisoners, and gauge the depths of human misery? What was it that caused William Wilberforce to lift that silvery voice of his for twenty years against slavery? Let us all do what we can in the work of this Union, and if we break but one

fetter or set but one slave free we shall have our reward in heaven. Nothing but the constraining love of Christ, I repeat, can urge us forward in this blessed work. The time is coming when, if we have persevered in the work now before us, thousands and tens of thousands of English men and English women will rise up and call us blessed. Let us all seek to do our work with a single eye to God's glory in the good of our fellow-creatures, and then we may at last realise those touching words of the poet Leigh Hunt:—

"Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,—
'What writest thou?' The angel raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered,—'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said,—'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blest:
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

The resolution was adopted, and the children sang "The Blue Bells of Scotland."

The Rev. W. CADMAN moved the following resolution: "That this meeting heartily thank Lord Shaftesbury for his kind and continued personal interest taken in the Society's welfare, and for presiding on this occasion." I hope it will be understood that in adopting it you intend to include Sir Robert Carden in the expression of your gratitude. I think, too, that by adopting this resolution you may be regarded as expressing your firm determination that the Ragged School movement shall not cease and shall not flag. Are you, my friends, determined that this movement shall go on? (Loud cries of "Yes.") Go on, I say, because the experiment, as it used to be called, is not a failure, it has proved successful. I could understand persons giving up if no good results had arisen from past efforts; but it is the experience of all Ragged School teachers, it is your experience, and that of those who have preceded you in the work, that when the net has been cast down in God's good providence on the right side of the ship there has been a great draught, and you have got hold of those whom you wished to bring out of darkness into light. And having met with so much success, shall you now give up your efforts? I say, No, go on. Is there not need to go on? You can point to Christian men and women, once children in Ragged Schools, who are now occupying useful positions in society, and who, as members of a Christian church, are adorning the doctrine of their Saviour. But then, a new generation of the same kind is springing up, and will continually be springing up while society in the

lower ranks remains in its present condition, while many habitations in London continue as they are, and while so little provision is made for comfort and decency in the dwellings of the poor. Mr. Fleming has alluded, in forcible terms, to the evil of drunkenness, and that is undoubtedly one great source of the mischiefs with which we have to deal. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the School Board, there are to be found in some streets and crowded alleys children who can, I fear, never be reached by the School Board; and, at all events, until those children are gathered together by others we are called upon to try and do them good. People have said, my friends, that your schools are not efficient; but if you train children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," if you teach them to abhor what is evil and cleave to what is good, you will still be able to point the results which prove their efficiency. While there are ragged children still to be taught, shall you give up your labours or shall you go on with them? I say, Go on. If the heavenly Master had intimated that He had no further need of you, or if He had said that He would carry on His own work without your instrumentality, then you might retire, thanking Him for mercies past and waiting till He shall come again and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." But you know that the Master still employs human instrumentality, and that you could not expect His approval at the last if you were to give up working now. Do, then, the work which He calls upon you to do, which His love constrains you to do, which His providence gives you opportunities of doing, which His Gospel supplies you with motives for doing, and with regard to which it has been promised you shall have the happiness and privilege of being a fellow-worker with the Holy Spirit Himself. Whilst we have opportunities of speaking a word or doing anything for "Him who died for us and rose again," shall we become silent and slothful because there are some who tell us that there is no further need of our efforts? I say, No, go on; go on persevering stedfastly and actively in the work of the Lord. Let me, then, recommend to this audience that in thanking Lord Shaftesbury to-night, they will at the same time authorise the secretary to tell his lordship that they are determined to go on with the work as long as there are opportunities for so doing, and that they have not forgotten the advice which good Counsellor Payne used to give them when in reference to their work he said, "At it, at it, always at it."

Sir ROBERT CARDEN then put the resolution, which was carried by acclamation. The children afterwards sang "God Save the Queen," and the proceedings closed with the benediction.

Hints for Teachers.

SYSTEMATIC STUDY.

We are often told, if we desire to be successful in acquiring knowledge, we must be industrious; but we are seldom admonished to be *systematic*. System, however, is equally as important as industry to him who wishes to accomplish anything useful.

He who works systematically accomplishes in the same length of time double the amount of work in a better manner, and with far greater ease to himself, than he does who works without system. A person who studies systematically, devoting certain specified hours to reading, and reading in succession books upon the same subject, acquires in a given length of time far more information, and has it more conveniently arranged for use, than he who reads more books, and devotes daily more of his time to reading, but who reads indiscriminately and without system, reading in succession books upon subjects not connected with each other.

He who reads indiscriminately and without system will always have his scraps of information stowed away in such a confused manner that when he desires to make use of them, he will be compelled to lose much time in hunting over his whole store before he will be able to collect and put together the parts which belong to and fit into each other.

HOW TO REBUKE.

Does the Ragged School teacher ever need to scowl at his scholars, or to speak sharply, in administering rebuke?

We think not. Every such manifestation before children is weakening. Our scholars know when their conduct irritates. They know when they need correction. They rather delight to see irritation and impatience in the teacher.

If, instead, they are met by a gentle firmness of voice and a look of love—not so beseeching and imploring as to suggest "softness" to the youngsters, who criticise emotions so cruelly, but of earnest resolute love—the most reckless disobedience will be checked. It may not be checked once for all. It possibly may not be totally cured. But the teacher will have the final victory.

The habit of gentleness in rebuke will have gained it for him. Scholars will respect the truly Christian spirit they see to be in such a teacher. They can no more withstand it than a quarrelsome man would think of resisting the calmness of a non-resisting Quaker neighbour.

Ragged School Union.

THE Monthly Meeting of the Managing Committee was held on Friday, May 7, 1875.

The contributions for April were reported to be £100 10s. 5d., and the payments to be £383 18s. 8d.

Quarterly grants amounting to £70 10s. were ordered to be paid to fifteen schools. The half-yearly grants to thirty schools for the payment of monitors, amounting to £55 3s. 11d., were ordered to be paid. Other payments amounted to £82 13s. 7d. Grants were voted to Shadwell Station School, £3 for school materials and £5 towards deficient income; Pell Street School, £3 for school materials and £5 towards deficient income; John Street, Homerton, £15 towards clearing off debt; Snowsfields School, £10 towards the cost of retaining, if possible, the building for school purposes. Final arrangements were made for holding the Annual Meeting.

Facts and Scraps.

PRAYER MEETINGS FOR RAGGED SCHOOLS.—We are glad to intimate that *all* the Sunday Schools connected with the Ragged School Union responded to the invitation of the Committee and used special Prayer Meetings on Sunday, May 9th. They were well attended; many senior scholars were also present.

DEATH OF MR. THOMAS WRIGHT.—This well-known prison philanthropist died on April 19th ult., aged 86. He was born in 1789, of humble parents, and worked forty-seven years in a Manchester ironfoundry. His wages, as foreman of one of the departments, were £3 10s. weekly, £2 of which he handed over to his wife for housekeeping; the rest he, for many years, employed in his good work for delinquents in prison. He took a great interest in Ragged Schools, and did much to promote the success of those established in Manchester. Nor was he a stranger to those in London whose interests he advocated on the platform.

BOY SWEEPS.—Lord Shaftesbury, in writing to the *Times* on the question of climbing boys, says:—"There is no flue in all Great Britain and Ireland which might not be made accessible to the sweeping machine, at the expense of a few shillings in most instances, and of a few pounds in the remainder." His lordship adds:—"It is simply monstrous that, to suit the parsimony, the indolence, or the obstinacy of proprietors, magistrates, and master sweeps, this inhuman and degrading servitude should be permitted, by connivance, in this age and country." Lord Shaftesbury asks what are the

School Boards about with their compulsory powers, as the boys used in climbing chimneys are all under thirteen years of age.

CHEAP FILTERS.—Water required for drinking should always be filtered. The following will make an efficient filter:—Place a piece of sponge in the hole of a flower-pot, put a layer of small stones at the bottom, and then fill the pot nearly to the brim with powdered charcoal and sand, covering it with a piece of flannel. The charcoal should be renewed occasionally, and the stones washed.—*The Cottager.*

CHRISTIAN COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION FOR ENGLAND.—The first annual meeting was held on March 20th at the residence of Mr. Quintin Hogg, Whitehall, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury. The report showed that the association has already twenty colporteurs at work, besides three agents partially employed, and the results of their operations have been most satisfactory. Lord Shaftesbury urged the great importance of this association to counteract the enormous and increasing issue of the corrupting literature which teems from the press. Formerly vicious books were coarse and offensive, but now they were so fascinating and insidious that the moral sense of the reader was lowered or lost almost before he was aware. A subscription of £40 per annum enables the association to provide a colporteur for any locality.

TYPHOID FEVER. — In districts otherwise healthy, this disease is one of the most fatal, both to grown-up people and children. It is almost invariably caused by the use of impure drinking water. In the Registrar-General's health reports, village after village is referred to in terms similar to this: "At Nunney, a village in Somersetshire, having a population of 832, Dr. Ballard records seventy-six cases of enteric fever as occurring in four months. The cases were limited in a remarkable way to families who obtained their water-supply from a small rivulet which received the sewage of several houses up-stream, and among them of the house in which the first case of enteric fever happened." The Typhoid epidemic in London last year was traced to impure water in milk.

Notices of Meetings.

BAND OF HOPE.

The annual meeting of the Band of Hope Union was held on April 28th at Exeter Hall, Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., president, in the chair.

The report, read by the Rev. G. W. M'Cree, showed that the progress of the movement was satisfactory. The metropolitan societies affiliated to the Union numbered 350, including many Ragged Schools, and additions were being constantly made to these. The chairman, in the course of a brief address, expressed himself as in thorough harmony with the principle of total abstinence and self-denial. It was a wonderful fact that there were four millions of

children in our Sunday Schools, and nothing could be wiser than the originating of a movement to get hold of them and induce them to see the absolute evil of indulgence in the habit. But he confessed that he felt anxious that more should be done to lessen the evil amongst them. He would not discuss the view as to how much or not the country might be prepared for the Permissive Bill; but if they could not get that, let them at least get something. Other addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. M. Grier, J. J. Lambert, Dr. Barnardo, and Mr. T. B. Smithies. A choir, composed of senior members of Bands of Hope, sang a selection of pieces at intervals during the evening, under the direction of Mr. Frederic Smith.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.

The people in the cheap lodging-houses had a field-day on Friday, April 30th. Three hundred and fifty inmates of the low lodging-houses were invited to tea. Lord Shaftesbury, accompanied by Lady Edith Ashley, were present.

Addresses were delivered by the noble chairman, F. Bevan, Esq., Mr. Sarl, and Mr. G. Holland. The Royal Osborne bell-ringers played several pieces, greatly pleasing the poor men and women present. Between each piece, the leader, Mr. Duncan Miller said a few words to encourage those invited.

The inmates of the lodging-houses, as a rule, are not to be met with in church, chapel, theatre, or mission services. The Gospel must be taken to them. About one thousand such persons are to be found in this locality.

WHITECROSS STREET, GOLDEN LANE.

On Friday, April 16th, the first café of the People's Café Company, Limited, was opened in a newly erected building, No. 184, Upper Whitecross Street, St. Luke's, a thoroughfare surrounded by a dense, poor population. The house is divided into several spacious apartments, neatly fitted and admirably adapted for the accommodation of the public. Plenty of light and ventilation add greatly to the comfort and cheerfulness of the rooms. On the ground floor is the principal department, with what may be termed the bar in the centre, and above are rooms to be appropriated specially to the gentler sex who may be disposed to frequent the Café St. Luke's. The furniture is of a description to be seen at more pretentious refreshment places not far from Charing Cross. Tables of marble tops on bronze supports, covered with almost snow-white thick cups and saucers; nickel metal tea-spoons, and pretty-looking milk-jugs are here at the service of the inhabitants of the Golden Lane district. The tea, coffee, and viands are of excellent quality, and dispensed at a tariff ranging from a penny to sixpence. The cost of the building has been something over £2,000. The company are erecting another in Whitechapel at a cost of £4,000. £10,000 have been subscribed in £1 shares, out of a capital of £100,000.

A large party of ladies and gentlemen took tea together at the café, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Sir Harcourt Johnstone, M.P., Mr. George Cruikshank, and several of the directors being of the number.

JUVENILE CHIMNEY-SWEEPS.

ABOVE half a century has elapsed since Sydney Smith called the attention of the public to the physical and moral evils incident to the employment of children to sweep our chimneys. When his famous article appeared, in 1818, in the *Edinburgh Review*, so startling was the revelation of this form of white slavery, that many regarded the tale of their woes as a violent distortion of facts. But, unhappily, the facts were too bad for any possible exaggeration: and that the custom could have existed so long without the denunciation of Christian philanthropists could only be referred to sheer ignorance of the cruel practices of master sweeps.

As is now the case with acrobats, the victims were selected in extreme youth, for the muscles become so rigid after puberty as to altogether preclude the easy ascent of flues. Not rarely children six years of age were chosen for a task which, if deferred to boyhood, could scarcely have been accomplished. Nor was this all; the trade customs were cruel in the extreme. Thus, for example, it was a common practice for the masters to light straw in the fire-grates, in order to stimulate novices, under the influence of fear, to a quick ascent up the flues. As might have been expected, many poor children were suffocated in the chimneys—and others were so jammed in narrow flues as to be unable to extricate themselves, and too many died through terror. Again, these human machines were subject to a special disease, known by the name of the "sweep's cancer"—a disease caused by the penetration of soot into the bruised flesh, so that the blood was poisoned. This disorder was not only terrible as regards pain, but it was absolutely incurable. Even if they escaped these evils, they were stunted in size, bow-backed and knock-kneed, and so weak in the limbs as scarcely to be able to bear their own weight.

These and similar facts led to commission after commission being issued by the Crown; but nothing was effectually done to extirpate this crying evil until Lord Shaftesbury, with his usual energy, took up the subject, and in conjunction with Mr. Fox Maule, afterwards Earl of Dalhousie, carried a Bill through Parliament to abolish boy chimney-sweeping.

This Act has been so loyally obeyed in London, Glasgow, and other great cities, that few of the rising generation are aware that our flues were formerly swept by *human machines*. But, unhappily, this is not the case in many of the midland and northern counties. The Act is not merely evaded but openly defied; unless we may ascribe such disobedience of the law to ignorance of its existence. But whether householders know or are ignorant of the legislative prohibition of boy chimney-sweeps, the police and the magistracy ought not only to be aware of its existence, but to enforce an Act which, in the words of Lord Shaftesbury, seeks to succour "the most oppressed, degraded, and tortured creatures on the face of the earth."

That the words thus used in the House of Lords are not an exaggerated statement of the evils denounced, facts which have recently oozed out in the press too fully prove. For example, at the last Cambridge Assizes a master sweep was tried, not for simple infringement of the law, but for causing the death of a boy whom he sent to sweep the flues of Fulbourne Lunatic Asylum. Two days after the poor child died, it is presumed through swallowing soot and other impure matter, which poisoned his blood.

Cynics have intimated that "Corporations have no conscience, and that they will do as a body what they would be ashamed to do as individuals." The civic authorities of Liverpool—one of the richest corporations in England—have unhappily done their best to confirm the truth of this maxim. For, instead of enforcing the law, as they were in duty bound to do, it has come out in evidence that they have permitted their flues to be swept by children. And all this at the risk of the boys being suffocated or blood-poisoned, and in any case with the certainty of indescribable pain being inflicted on the helpless poor.

These and similar facts, which he narrated to the House of Lords on May 11th ult., have led Lord Shaftesbury to introduce a Bill to further enforce a law which has already proved so beneficial to a helpless class. This Bill provides that tickets are to be issued by the chief officer of police in each police district, authorising persons to carry on the business of chimney-sweeps in the district. These certificates are to be renewed yearly, and are not to be transferable, and any person acting as chimney-sweeper without a certificate will be liable to a fine not exceeding ten shillings for the first offence, and for every subsequent offence to a

fine not exceeding twenty shillings. Any person convicted of an offence under this or any other Act may be deprived of his certificate by the magistrate, or a note of the conviction may be endorsed upon the certificate.

Whether this penalty is sufficient *alone* to meet the enormity of this great social crime has been questioned by many journalists, all of whom have done themselves great honour by their energetic support of Lord Shaftesbury in the matter. They consider that at least imprisonment, if not penal servitude, ought in addition to be inflicted on all those who, in defiance of the law, force boys up flues—in other words, do all they can to expose these hapless children to the danger of suffocation.

We are sorry to find, from the discussion which followed the speech on the second reading of the Bill, that the Government, instead of enforcing the existing Act, through their mouthpiece, Earl Beauchamp, gave a very cold reception, if not a decided opposition to this Bill. In spite of the many cases of cruelty, and even of death, narrated by Lord Shaftesbury, he could only say that "he believed that much more good would be done by calling public attention to the subject than could be effected by the Legislature." He also added that "he did not see how the legislation proposed would conduce to the object desired." Thus, while the Lord Steward, on the one hand, objected to anything being attempted to crush these crying evils, he, on the other hand, intimated that the Bill did not go far enough. Happily the House of Lords did not understand the force of such imperfect logic as this; and after speeches in its favour by the Bishop of London, Earl Fortescue, and Lord Aberdare, it cordially agreed to the second reading of the Bill, which bids fair to become law this session.

In one of its most trenchant articles, the *Times* of the 12th ult. gave a vigorous support to the Bill. In it, whilst condemning the active opposition of the Government to such a needful measure, it forcibly said:—"We have not much patience with the condescending compliments with which Lord Beauchamp, on the part of the Government, treated the generous and earnest effort of Lord Shaftesbury. It may be a matter for discussion whether his proposal will be effectual; but either that or some other means must be immediately taken to suppress a national scandal. If Lord Beauchamp's children were liable to be forced up a chimney to-

morrow, he would not be content to wait for the gradual influence of Lord Shaftesbury's speeches, admirable as those speeches are. We may rely upon it, however, that Lord Shaftesbury will not rest till this cruelty has been finally suppressed."

Well did Lord Shaftesbury say, in a peroration which has been universally admired for its persuasive eloquence, "I have done what I can, and will ask your lordships to do the same. Surely you will now—I say it with all respect—you will, as a part of the Imperial Parliament, now emphatically declare that your laws are passed to be obeyed and not to be systematically broken; that your beneficent statutes shall not be set aside by high or low, rich or poor; and that as all rule and authority come from above, you will exercise them in the spirit in which you have received them, with regard to the very least as feeling your care, and the greatest as not exempt from your power."

Though the subject does not bear directly on their special labours, yet nevertheless Ragged School teachers have an indirect interest in the suppression of boy chimney-sweeping. Our labours, for example, have had no slight influence in directing the attention of philanthropists to the evils necessarily incident to overwork and under-feeding of the young; and if there is now a general tendency to prevent poor children entering the labour market at too early an age, as well as to diminish their hours of work, no slight portion of this legislation, as well as the public opinion on which it is based, is due to the facts which Ragged School teachers brought under the public notice. Again, any measure which tends to raise the standard of health of the poorer classes, equally tends to raise their moral tone, and to lessen our special sphere of work, and thus to usher in the time when the religious and physical habits of the masses will be so elevated as to render Ragged Schools no longer necessary. We trust, then, that our readers will do all they can to aid in extirpating a species of labour which "crushes the life out of young hearts."

THE LONDON WORKFIELD.

Our Divine Master, in one of his inimitable parables, gave this injunction: "Son, go *work to-day* in my vineyard." Though the population of the whole of Palestine scarcely exceeded that of London,

yet the command was disobeyed, and the fields ripe for the sickle were unreaped. The same command is given to us in these days *individually*, for so long as one soul is unsaved this canon of work cannot be repealed.

But some may say, "What is *our* workfield?"—we who live in that city of cities, London. Some statistics recently issued by the London City Mission shall tell.

It covers within the fifteen miles' radius of Charing Cross nearly 700 square miles.

It numbers within these boundaries four millions of inhabitants.

It comprises 100,000 foreigners from every quarter of the globe.

It contains more Roman Catholics than Rome itself, more Jews than the whole of Palestine, more Irish than Dublin, more Scotchmen than Edinburgh, more Welshmen than Cardiff, more country-born persons than the counties of Devon, Warwickshire, and Durham combined.

It has a birth in it every five minutes, and a death every eight minutes.

It has 123 persons every day, and 45,000 annually added to its population by birth, to say nothing of immigration.

It has 1,000 ships and 9,000 sailors in its port every day.

It has 117,000 habitual criminals on its police register, increasing at an average of 30,000 per annum, and has more than one-third of all the crime in the country committed in it.

It has 23,000 persons living in its common lodging-houses.

It has as many beershops and gin-palaces as would, if placed side by side, stretch from Charing Cross to Portsmouth, a distance of 73 miles, and it has 38,000 drunkards annually brought before its magistrates.

It has as many paupers as would more than occupy every house in Brighton.

It has upwards of a million of habitual neglecters of public worship.

It has sixty miles of open shops every Lord's day.

On these awful statistics, the Rev. E. White, of Camden Town, thus comments:—

"If there are some disadvantages in the congregation of so vast an assemblage of mankind in one place, there might seem also to be some spiritual advantages over country districts. If, on the one hand, there are more stimulating excitements and fiercer temptations, on the other, the people are nearer at hand, and can be more readily approached than if scattered abroad shepherdless over an immense territory. Yet the facts scarcely answer to the theory. For, in London, out of three millions, it is affirmed by Mr. Horace Mann that

there are a million who could not be reckoned in any kind of religious census. A million of the people of London are aliens from the spiritual commonwealth, and strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world—as thoroughly heathen as if they lived in China or Japan.

How would all this London heathenism strike us if it could be massed together, and separated from the surrounding Christianity; if, for example, it could be all transported to the southern side of the Thames, and spread over Lambeth, Southwark, and Bermondsey, there to develop life in its own fashion, free from any intermixture of forms or customs derived from the presence of religious faith? You would then see a wide expanse of inhabited territory as large as Glasgow, and ten times the size of Bristol, from which no spires rose into the air, indicating the locality of the houses of God; the only great public buildings being theatres, where hell itself would hold its saturnalia of revelry, and halls of justice and enormous jails, where terror repressed the excesses of violence and crime. You would have none of the buildings which Christian philanthropy erects for the solace of the miserable or the education of the young. You would have a city such as ignorance, atheism, and infidelity would make it. There you would see life gradually sinking into barbarism from the absence of the redeeming influence, and personal character brutalised by general drunkenness, debauchery, and falsehood. The ungodly portion of the community little know the benefits they derive from living among those who fear God and work righteousness. If the tares were gathered out from among the wheat, and stacked together now, even here they would take fire by spontaneous combustion of destructive passion, and blaze forth in a conflagration which would know no limits to its fury but the boundaries of so detestable a society."

Ought not facts like these to stimulate every one who *really* believes that hell is a terrible reality to occupy some field of Christian labour at once? But if any one says, "In a sphere so large as this I scarcely know where to labour," we in reply would say, "Go to the nearest Ragged School and proffer your services." Unhappily there is scarcely one school which is not under-manned; and we are sure that whether young or middle-aged, or whatever your natural or acquired gifts, a sphere of usefulness will be speedily found suited to your special abilities. See, then, that your corner of the London workfield is filled.

In Memoriam.

WILLIAM HUGHES.

J. R. BURCHETT, Esq.

MR. KEEVES.

"Must friends and kindred droop and die,
And helpers be withdrawn?"

Yes! for

"Part of the host has crossed the flood,
And part is crossing now."

It is again our painful duty to refer to the demise of three more of our friends and helpers. Death has claimed and taken from our list of workers William Hughes, J. R. Burchett, Esq., and Mr. Keeves.

William Hughes.

The circumstances attending the death of our friend Hughes were painful in the extreme—struck down suddenly in the discharge of daily duty in the prime of life, and in the midst of a useful career in church and school. He came to London thirty-three years ago, and was apprenticed to a mechanic. As the time of his apprenticeship was running out he became the subject of converting grace. This change was soon manifest by his attendance at public worship, and by his beginning to devote himself to works of benevolence and love. At that time the Ragged School in Agar Town was in its early struggles for existence, attracted his attention and at once elicited his sympathies, and to it he devoted his spare time and talents for the long period of twenty-seven years. His devotion to Christian work did not interfere with a faithful discharge of his duties to his employers, to whom he had been apprenticed and continued to serve concurrently with his school and church work.

On May 19th last he went to fix an alarum to the lift of a large West End firm, as an extra precaution to warn off persons from it while in motion. He had been so at work for two hours, and had bored through two floors, when the man in charge of the lift, either forgetting or not knowing that Hughes was beneath, pulled the lever, and suddenly the lift, with a ton weight upon it, dropped upon our friend, crushing him to instant death.

"Far from this world of toil and strife,
He's present with the Lord;
The labours of his mortal life
End in a large reward."

Our friend, thus taken away, was diligent, painstaking, ever ready to lend a helping hand in any good cause. He was provident, and had taken out a life policy to meet the necessity of his family in case he was first removed, but unfortunately he insured in the Albert office, and for many years paid his premiums, but the sad, sad failure of that assurance company disappointed all his hopes and provident forecasting. His widow is an invalid, and with two children, one subject to fits, are left in very dependent circumstances. A fund is being collected to meet first necessities, and to help towards gaining a living. Contributions will be gratefully received by Mr. Gent, at 1, Exeter Hall, London.

JAMES ROBERT BURCHETT, ESQ.

On June 2nd, at the advanced age of full eighty-five years, Mr. Burchett passed from his earthly labours. It is to this gentleman that the Agar Town Ragged School largely owes its useful career. Some nine-and-twenty years since the Secretary of the Ragged School Union spent a Sunday in Agar Town, and took notes of the Sabbath occupation of the inhabitants. The site of the "town" had not long before been open land for some distance behind the houses lining the Old St. Pancras Road, now mostly covered by the Midland station and railway. The land at that time could only be had on a short lease or agreement, and the consequence was that the ground was covered by small houses of one or two floors, and to a large extent built by labouring men in their overtime. Sundays seemed wholly devoted to this purpose. Donkey racing, smoking, drinking, and gossiping seemed the chief occupation of those not occupied in building. These notes of the Secretary were written out and sent to the Rev. John Woodwark, by whom they were forwarded to Mr. Burchett, who soon found opportunities to talk over the subject both with the Minister and the Secretary. His kind and generous response to do something to meet this state of morals, or rather of immorals, encouraged the taking of a covered skittle-shed, at £10 per year rent. The roof could be touched by a person standing, and the floor was the common earth. Some forms, a table, a Bible and reading books were at once sent in. The boys and girls soon found out the place was for them, and filled it to overflowing. The success was such that ground was ultimately taken, and at a cost of £300 a room was put up for two hundred children. In it Sunday, Day, and Evening Schools have been conducted, with Mothers' Meetings, Penny Banks, Mission Services, &c. The cost of the new room was largely met by Mr. Burchett. To the day of his death he took a lively interest in its work, and generously supported it.

Rather more than seventy-six years ago the father (also a James

Robert Burchett) of our aged friend was engaged in precisely similar work, in establishing schools for the neglected and destitute in Kent Street and Mint Street, Borough—Ragged Schools to all intents and purposes, though without the name. In the Memoir of Thomas Cranfield the subject is referred to thus:—"In May, 1799, Mr. Burchett, moved by the powerful pleading of the Rev. R. Hill on behalf of Sabbath Schools, and by the application of Mr. Cranfield for assistance, convened a meeting of his friends at the Hoxton Academy Chapel, with the view of raising annual subscriptions for defraying the expenses of the Kent Street School, and devising means for supplying it with teachers. At this meeting only four persons attended—namely, Messrs. Burchett, Beams, Pound, and Cranfield. The subscriptions amounted to four guineas, and each engaged to contribute annually the sum he then had subscribed." Such was the commencement of two schools, both of which are still flourishing in usefulness. On the list of schools under the auspices of the Ragged School Union one is named Amicable Row and the other Harrow Street.

Another short extract from the Memoir will show how the work extended under the elder Mr. Burchett:—"Mr. Cranfield was called to assist Mr. Burchett in opening a school in Rosemary Lane; which being accomplished and placed under the care of suitable persons, Mr. B. directed his whole attention to the schools in Southwark, where scholars were rapidly increasing."

The influence of so worthy a father was great upon the son, who always spoke of him with the greatest veneration, and to follow in his steps of Christian effort seemed to be one of his greatest pleasures. Increasing age, attended with increasing infirmity, made it needful for him to give place to younger men, but his desire to promote the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom remained to the last. When visited by the Secretary before named, two days before his death, he was found have a sweet loving trust in the Saviour's merits and intercession. While feeling very weak, and sure the Master was about to take him, he said to his visitor, with childlike simplicity and confidence, "Speak to Jesus for me." After prayer, gladness and thankfulness seemed to beam in the countenance of the dying saint. Thus has passed away another of the early and worthy promoters and supporters of the Ragged School movement.

MR. KEEVES

had been the respected and useful master of the Ragged School in Bacon Street, Bethnal Green, for twenty years. He was painstaking, patient, and persevering; sometimes wearied in, but never tired of

his work. His greatest delight was to see his room full, and his boys diligent, fully employed in laying the foundation for usefulness and comparative respectability. In this way he served the rising generation till, at the beginning of the present year, health failed, and disease made rapid inroads on remaining strength. He entered rest in February last. On the Sunday following, his minister, the Rev. R. W. Loveridge, of St. Philip's, Bethnal Green, preached a funeral sermon from

"And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

In the course of the sermon he said:—"We are met here to-night to learn the broad lesson of a good man's life. We are met, too, to sympathise with mourning friends, to mingle our tears with theirs, and to bid them in their distress to look upward with hope. There is no grand story of a grand man's life to tell. It is a humble story; it is a story, though, of one of God's great ones. If we search the pages of our country's history in the years to come, we shall not see his name and deeds recorded there: he will be nowhere known among the great ones of this world: but though little known here his name is known in heaven. We might perhaps find it in the committee-books of the Ragged School Union; we might find it inscribed on the tokens of love which the little ones among whom he laboured have taken from him to their homes to ponder over his lessons there. But, best of all, it is recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life. He toiled amongst us on earth, but he has left us with the bright assurance that he has passed into the presence of God, and of him therefore we will say, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.'

"As I stood beside the bed of our departed friend, and tried to cheer him in his suffering by pointing him to his better home, it seemed as if the thought of whither he was going banished anguish from his heart. He triumphed in Christ. He fought for Christ long ago. He fought for Christ in the streets of Bethnal Green, in the highways and byways of this densely-peopled neighbourhood. He had talked to others of Christ's mighty power to save; he had knelt before Christ himself in adoration. The Lord would not fail him. He sustained him in the battle of life; he upheld him in the battle of death; and blessed is he now with the dead who have so died. He died in Christ, and therefore he is happy."

ST. PETERSBURG RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Like most European capitals, St. Petersburg—a city of above half a million—has a large population akin to that which tenant our casual wards, as well as of destitute children. Besides, as it is at the mouth of the Neva, this city attracts thousands who have all the vices and roughness common to river and sea-side people. When, too, it is remembered that the lower classes of Russia are as much, if not more, addicted to drunkenness as similar classes in England, we cannot wonder that this capital of the Czar's should teem with a population who, if they are not criminal, at least grovel in vice, and live from hand to mouth.

To meet the religious and social claims of classes like these, no scheme has yet been devised which can compete with that of the Ragged School—embracing, of course, in that phrase all the appliances in vogue for the welfare of the old as well as of the young. As in England so is it in Russia, for the plans of usefulness found so successful here have proved equally potent in "holy Russia" to civilise and to save. Some noble Russian ladies who yearned to reclaim poor or outcast children visited several of the London Ragged Schools three or four years ago in order to learn our mode of working; and from what they saw in these visits they determined to introduce Ragged Schools into the metropolis of their native country. Amongst those whom they consulted was Lord Radstock, who was for many years an earnest teacher at Grotto Passage Ragged School, and who has done very much to preach the pure Gospel to the Russian aristocracy.

In addition to the ordinary Bible Sunday Schools, a Reformatory for three hundred boys and girls has just been established, and it is supported entirely by voluntary contributions—several noble ladies actively supervising its working. There is also a male Night Refuge, modelled, after visitation, on that attached to Field Lane Ragged School. An Industrial Home for Destitute Women has twenty-five inmates, who help to support themselves as laundresses till fitted for permanent situations. About sixty have been rescued from starvation or sin during the past three years. A Bible Woman has also been recently engaged, and out of her labours it is probable that a Mothers' Meeting will grow.

The success of these efforts has led to a wide circulation of the Holy Scriptures. Thus, as in London, Ragged Schools have become an auxiliary to the noble Bible Society, though without the name. We trust that our Russian friends will be led to supply their scholars with Bibles at a reduced rate, as does the London Union.

Mr. Alexander, of the Crystal Palace Bible Stand, after a recent

visit to St. Petersburg, thus writes:—"One feature of this work is remarkable—namely, that most of the efforts to spread the Gospel in its simplicity and purity are made by ladies of the highest social position and culture. Foremost among these 'honourable women' is her Imperial Highness the Princess Eugenie d'Oldenburg, niece of the Emperor, and cousin to our Duchess of Edinburgh. This exalted lady devotes her rare ability to the good of others, and is known and loved as the true guardian of the poor. She not only devotes herself to the organisation and direction of numerous charitable institutions, such as the Society for aiding Discharged Prisoners, the Institution for Training Hospital Nurses, &c., but she visits the hospitals and prisons, and distributes the Scriptures to the inmates. The princess has also translated some English tracts into Russ, and has them scattered far and wide.",

It is pleasing to find, at a period when so many educationists either ignore or treat with contempt our efforts to civilise and Christianise the destitute and outcast classes, that the Russian nobility have so readily adopted the plans so signally blessed in the London Ragged Schools. That they may be as successful there, as here, is our earnest prayer, and we need not wish for them a nobler history when their annals come to be written.

THE STEPNEY CRADLE.

THE new Crèche (*anglicé*, "cradle") premises, Nos. 12, 14, and 16, Stepney Causeway, were opened on May 24, by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Gurney, with a grand bazaar and fancy sale in aid of the new Infant Home. The Crèche was established four or five years ago by Mrs. Hilton, a leading member of the Society of Friends, who, during her missionary work in East London, was struck by the neglect of infants while their mothers were at work, or absent from home from other causes.

Were any argument required to show that the institution is really an oasis in the desert of poverty and wretchedness which abound in the locality, it would have been witnessed in the crowd of poor people and children who gathered in the neighbourhood, attracted by the flags and banners which decorated the front of the building. So perfect and complete are the arrangements at the Crèche, that it has been taken as a model for similiar institutions which have been opened in various parts of the kingdom. Previous to the opening of the bazaar, the visitors were afforded an opportunity of inspecting the institution. In the Crèche proper there are about 100 children of both sexes, and of ages varying from three weeks to

five years. These are taken in early in the morning and kept till the evening, while their mothers are engaged away from their homes. They are washed, dressed, fed, nursed, when old enough are given some rudimentary education, and are carefully looked after, the parents being only required to pay the nominal sum of twopence per day. The various rooms are replete with cleanliness and comfort, and there is a competent staff of nurses to look after the children. There is an infirmary for those who may have temporary ailments, in which there were about a dozen patients.

An Infant Home springs, as it were, out of the Crèche. Mrs. Hilton found some very pressing cases of children being left without home care, owing to their mothers being obliged to go to hospitals, convalescent institutions, or from other inevitable causes; she accordingly took some adjoining premises, repaired, fitted them up, and furnished them, for the purpose of a Home, at considerable cost. There are already more than twenty little ones in this Home, of ages from three months to six years, some of these cases being of a very painful nature. The payment is but nominal.

It was to defray the cost of this branch of the institution that the bazaar was set on foot. It was held in a spacious marquee erected in the playground, which was very tastefully arranged and decorated. The stock was of an interesting character, contributions having been made by friends from three years to ninety-five years of age in all parts of the kingdom, and even in America. It consisted of fancy needlework, ornaments, and other fancy articles, wool-work, Shetland goods, articles of ladies' clothing, pictures, children's clothing, clothing for the poor, photographs, drawings, dolls and other toys, old china, &c. The children, or such of them as were able to walk, were then marched in in detachments, and presented a striking picture of cleanliness and health. A number of them gathered around Miss Hilton and sung several nursery songs, that young lady—who is as indefatigable as her worthy mother in watching over the comforts and welfare of their little charges—presiding at the piano.

A writer in the *Christian World* says that, beautiful as were the articles exhibited—

"After all, the sight of sights in Stepney Causeway was not the bazaar, nor its wonders, nor the lovely flowers with which the marquee had been decorated, and which made you forget the grim and grimy slums which filled the streets and impaired the air all round; but the new Home into which Mrs. Hilton had collected her little *protégés*, and who, all in their best, seemed in topmost spirits, and were perpetually kissing and shaking hands all round. As I heard the history of these little ones, it was clear that the Crèche was

supplying a great want in that dense population. Here was one little fellow quite blind, and who would be carefully attended in the Crèche till he became old enough and fortunate enough to obtain admission to a blind asylum. Here was another, father dead, mother at work, and three other children to look after; and little Willie, as they called him, was taken in, till, after a due course of feeding, his little bones would harden, and he would be enabled to walk. I saw two little boys placed here, the father of whom was a sailor at sea, and the mother insane. Another little one's mother was in a convalescent asylum, and here it was cared for till she was restored to health and strength, and her daily work. With good food, careful nursing, clean well-ventilated rooms, unlimited soap and water, and just enough teaching to amuse and develop their infantile powers, it is obvious these children have a fair chance of becoming very different—bodily and spiritually—to the unwashed little street arabs with which the district swarms.

And the beauty of the Crèche is that it is not a demoralising institution; that it does not pauperise the mothers; that they all are expected to pay, and do pay. The Crèche just takes care of the child while the mother is at work. It is true, the cases to which I have referred are those of children who reside on the premises; but these are not in the Crèche proper, in which there are some 115 little pupils, but in the Home, which has lately been added, and the necessity of which, I think, those cases abundantly illustrate.

It is quite correct to say that many a young life is saved, and it is well to encourage the hope that the institution, by accustoming the mothers of the district to the sight of cleanliness and care for little ones, may raise the standard of home all round. Life goes, as it is, hardly enough with poor mothers and large families in London. There is no sadder sight to see than that of little ones at play in a dirty court where they get no fresh air, and where they see no pleasant grass and flowers. But in the streets the dangers are of course increased tenfold, and if the mother stops at home to guard her lambs, how can she earn for them their daily bread? Hence the need of such an institution as that which it is to the credit of Mrs. Hilton to have established in London. It is thus little ones are saved from the perils of low life. It is thus we may look forward with hope.

'Weeds upon the wayside worthless
Shall be God's blessed flowers.'"

AN ABSTRACT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT ON RAGGED SCHOOLS WEST AND SOUTH OF LONDON,

By Mr. Hytche.

In the West and South of London there are Sixty-three Ragged School Institutions; thirty-three of these being planted in the South. Fifty of the buildings were erected as schools, and ten more have been much improved.

Much of my time last year was occupied in conferring with local officials.

Last year I paid 637 visits to Schools, etc.

Notwithstanding the entire or partial collapse of some institutions, and the increasing difficulty found in getting funds or workers, I am glad to say that twenty-seven institutions have increased their operations. They were mostly of a religious or social character.

In fifty-eight buildings used as Sunday Schools, twenty-seven Morning Schools are held, with an average attendance of 1,570. Forty meet in the afternoon with 4,430 in attendance. The thirty-eight which assemble in the evening attract about 5,000 scholars. In connection with Sunday Schools there are twenty-one Senior Bible Classes, with 450 members. The teachers enrolled number 1,100, of whom an average of 800 attend every Lord's day.

Probably the most permanent influence on the religious feelings springs from the twenty-two *Senior Bible Classes* attached to Sunday Schools. They have an average attendance of about 500, mostly above the usual school age. A part of their success is doubtless due to the thought-out lesson which the conductors find it imperative to prepare.

Teachers' Prayer Meetings are held by thirty-seven schools, attended by about 1,000 teachers and senior scholars.

This review of Sunday School work would not be complete without a reference to our *Children's Services*. Twenty-seven such services are now held, with an aggregate attendance of 900.

Day Schools

are attached to twenty-four institutions. Of these ten are included in the School Board list of "Efficient" Schools. In addition, in eleven buildings Cheap Pay Schools are conducted, and fourteen more are Board Schools, making forty-nine buildings used as Day Schools.

The Free Day Schools include 5 Boys', 6 Girls', and 20 Mixed Schools, making 31 distinct Day Schools. On the Registers there are 4,374 scholars. Of these 3,724 were present at my examinations.

They are taught by 40 paid teachers, aided by 121 paid monitors.

As regards the social status of our Day Scholars, it may be stated that last year I counted more shoeless children than for some time past. Dirty, uncombed, and ragged, they seemed to be in their true place. Every pains seems to be taken to restrict the scholars to the right class.

The attainments of the Day Scholars were again tested last year. Of the 3,724 who were present, all who had attained six years—2,327 in number—were individually examined. 557 passed in the life of Christ, 1,188 passed in Reading, 1,648 in Writing, and 1,564 in Dictation Spelling. In Arithmetic 1,634 passed in Addition, 1,019 in Subtraction, 939 in Multiplication, 817 in Division, 1,025 in the Multiplication Table, 1,244 in Notation of three figures, and 939 in Notation of four figures.

Night Schools.

Night Schools for elementary instruction are held by thirty-two buildings. Another holds a *Girls' Industrial Class;* and fourteen more hold *Psalmody Classes, Bands of Hope,* and *Children's Services.* It is thus seen that forty-seven buildings are opened on one or more week evenings for the benefit of children. Six other buildings are only available on week days or Sundays.

The aggregate attendance at the Night Schools is 1,560; the other week night operations for children attract 1,000.

The Night Schools include twenty-one for boys, with 650 in attendance; seventeen for girls, with an average of 600; and seven Mixed are attended by 310. These figures show that there are forty-five distinct Night Schools for elementary education.

The Night Schools are taught by thirty-five paid teachers. Seven are taught solely by fifty volunteers, and thirty more voluntary teachers conduct the other week-night operations.

It may be remarked that in many Night Schools there has been a larger attendance of the really ragged—as distinguished from boys in regular employment—than for some years. No boys, in fact, ought to be allowed to attend our Night Schools unless they are members of the destitute class—except they owe their improved social status to the operations of the school. Really destitute or outcast boys, indeed, are more easily managed than boys of a higher social grade. The fire in winter is no slight attraction to street boys.

Bands of Hope are held in seven buildings closed for secular instruction. They attract above 500 children. At one—Ann Street—in addition to the ordinary pledge of abstinence they are required to abstain from tobacco, gambling, and swearing—vices to which the bulk of poor boys are addicted.

Industrial Classes.

In my district there are seven *Boys' Industrial Classes,* with 100 members.

Needlework, stocking mending, or knitting are taught in thirty-five Girls' Schools, to about 1,500. In addition, one school has a *Cookery Class,* attended by twelve girls, under the instruction of the mistress. The teachers of all the schools which give dinners are aided by the elder girls in preparing them.

Banks and Clubs.

One or both of these useful social agencies are attached to forty-seven institutions.

There are 38 Penny Banks; 26 Clothing Clubs; 4 Dorcas or Maternal Societies; 3 Coal Clubs; and 4 New Provident Clubs; making 75 Banks or Clubs.

PARENTS' MEETINGS

are held by forty-two institutions. Of the regular Mothers' Meetings there are thirty, with an average attendance of about 900. Few are restricted to the parents of scholars, many very aged women being attracted by the Christian kindness shown by the conductors.

There are thirty-four Ragged Churches or Mission Services, with an average of 1,500 worshippers.

LIBRARIES

are attached to thirty-one institutions. In the aggregate they include nearly 6,000 volumes. In connection with their Libraries, two schools have *Pure Literature Societies*. One, since its establishment, has sold above 13,000 serials.

In conclusion, I need scarcely say that I feel it to be a great privilege to have been permitted to aid this movement for twenty-one years, and should any measure of health be restored, I hope still to be able to aid Ragged Schools in some way—if not as an official, at least as a volunteer.

Hints for Teachers.

TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS.

THE great end of the Ragged School teacher should be to bring his scholars to Christ. To any who are aiming at less than this I would say, "If you do not lead your scholars to Christ, humanly speaking, they may never be led to him at all." Do not believe those who doubt whether children can be converted. The holy Baxter tells us, if parents and teachers did but perform their duty, ministers would have few conversions under their preaching, for that the young would generally be brought to Christ before they arrived at adult years. Trusting, then, that we are agreed that the conversion of your scholars is to be the grand object at which you should aim, I proceed to notice some of the qualifications for obtaining this result. I would name—

1. *Earnest, Cheerful Piety*—earnest, that it may be aggressive; cheerful, that it may be attractive. It is almost a self-evident proposition that if the Sunday School is to be a nursery for the church, the teachers themselves must be decided Christians. It is possible, indeed, that God may bless his own truth when spoken by unconverted men, but this is not likely to be the case, nor is it likely that those truths which lead the soul to Christ will be spoken by unconverted teachers, or if spoken, will be so *uttered* as to impress the mind, and lead to decision for Christ. As we should shrink from encouraging any unconverted man to take upon him-

self the office of the ministry, even so should we shrink from asking any one to become a Sunday School teacher who gives no evidence of personal religion. The late Dr. Arnold used to say, it was unnecessary that he should have a school of three, or four, or five hundred boys; but it was necessary that the boys he had under his care should have a high tone of moral feeling, which would preserve them from all that was mean and false, and unworthy of them. To the superintendents of Sunday and Ragged Schools I would say, It is not necessary for you to have a crowded schoolroom; but if you wish to have the presence and the blessing of the Master you serve, it is indispensably necessary that the teachers of your school should be men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

2. *Intelligence and Aptness to Teach.*—To be intelligent teachers of God's truth we must be diligent students of that truth. We must avail ourselves of all the help we can obtain, thoroughly to understand what may be difficult and obscure. We must welcome all that can illustrate and explain its meaning; and having mastered the lesson, we shall not be afraid of our scholars asking questions. To this should be added aptness to teach. Some men have great powers of acquiring, and but little facility of communicating knowledge. Aptness to teach with some may be so natural that it is scarcely an effort; but with most it is the result of many failures and much perseverance. If your heart is in your work, and you know what you have to teach, sooner or later the right words and the right manner will come.

3. *Heart in the Work.*—This will not be the case if the teacher does not believe in his work. If he has low views of that work as likely to produce little result, the result will be little. If you mean to succeed you must expect success, and labour for it. Yours must be a work of faith, and according to your faith will the result be. And it must be a labour of love. Your scholars will soon find out whether it is so or not. If you come among them with kind words and a loving heart, their young hearts will soon open to receive your instructions; but not so if you come without love. "I love God and every little child," said a German author. I know not a better motto for a Sunday School teacher who desires to lead his scholars into the fold of the Good Shepherd.

4. *Individualising.*—Pray for your scholars. I do not mean pray for your *class*. Of course you do that. What I mean is, that you should mention each of your scholars *by name* before the Throne of Grace; that if you have been grieved by the insensibility of one of your scholars to the power of the truth, you should specially plead for him, that he may not close his heart against the offer of salvation. And if you have been cheered by the rising emotion of another scholar, under some warm appeal you have made to your class, that you specially plead for that scholar that these impressions may be permanent. We lose much at the mercy seat because we satisfy ourselves with general petitions. We need to ask for specific blessings, and to bring individual cases before the Hearer of prayer. Remember Elliot's motto,

"Prayer and pains can do anything."

5. *Perseverance.*—You are not to expect success without this. Neither are you to expect any sudden crisis in the mental history of your scholars, but rather the gradual training of their young minds to the acknowledgment and belief of the truth. Neither are you to be discouraged because you see much vivacity in your scholars. This is the buoyancy of youth, and should not be regarded as inconsistent with real piety. The more natural religion is the better, and the more joyful the better too. Persevere in your work. "Be not weary in well-doing, and in due season you shall reap if you faint not."

6. *Consecration to your Work.*—This implies that you lay aside all that is inconsistent with that work; that you shrink from entering any scene, or engaging in any amusements, in which you would be ashamed to meet your scholars. Give yourselves wholly to your work. Do it heartily as unto the Lord. Remember how He acted who left us an example that we should tread in His steps; how as He looked upon His disciples, and commended them in prayer to His God and our God, He said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself;" that is, "For their salvation I set myself apart from all other objects. I consecrate myself to this object—the everlasting welfare of my disciples." If thus with prayer, and faith, and love, you consecrate yourselves to your work, you shall not labour in vain.

A dear friend of mine, who has lately passed into the skies, was able before she died to count at least one hundred of her scholars, who at various times had been led to give themselves unto the Lord. Such a life was not spent in vain. May you likewise have the honour and the joy of saving souls from death; and having brought many to righteousness on earth, may you in the world above shine as the stars for ever and ever!

OLIVER JONES.

Liverpool.

MODEL SUPERINTENDENTS.

THERE is an old saying that "still waters run deep." It is your shallow brook that ripples and splashes over the stones with much ado and noise. A great display of activity and business on the part of superintendents is not always to be taken as a sign of efficiency.

As the *Christian Union* says:—The latest description of a model superintendent does not paint him as an active, omnipresent individual, rushing from class to class, and never resting for a moment during the whole hour; but, on the contrary, makes him out the quietest person in the house, doing up his necessary work in the briefest manner, and then sitting still and leisurely looking at his "charge."

The visitor never suspected that there was anything remarkable about his retiring and silent ways until told that in reality the superintendent had an uncommon talent for harmonising classes and teachers, and getting each one in the right place. By keeping quiet and attentively watching all that was going on, he was able to obtain just the knowledge he wanted to secure, the best organisation for his school.

Children's Page.

THE TELEGRAPH BOY.

BESIDES the industrial work and agricultural pursuits carried on in the Refuge connected with St. Giles's Ragged School, for training the boys to earn their own living, a Telegraphic Class has been formed by the schoolmaster, for the purpose of training a few of the most intelligent lads for employment in the Post Office. Captain Grant kindly presented the instrument and apparatus necessary for this class.

The first fruit of this interesting class is that of a lad who first worked in the garden, and then became, at his own desire, a shepherd boy on the farm at Bisley. He has just received an appointment in a public company, as a telegraphist, at the salary of £30.

Who and what was this little fellow that has thus risen? This is his own statement:—

"My mother never told me who my father was, and I never saw him, or heard anything about him. From the time I was five years old, I used to go about the country with my mother, who carried a basket, and sold pins, needles, tape, and cotton. We never had a home, but used to sleep in lodging-houses at night. I never went to school while she lived. When I was nine years old, my mother was taken ill at Reading with fever, and died. I then started on my own account, and finally settled at Kingston. There I took to crossing-sweeping, shoe-blacking, and running of errands. I was there about two years, and went to a night school."

While the poor boy was plying his calling of crossing-sweeper, he attracted the attention of some ladies at Surbiton, one of whom was particularly drawn to the lad, on account of his civil and obliging manner. She got him to attend a night school, until at length she thought that nothing good would come out of the life he was leading. She therefore resolved to rescue him from it, and give him a chance of doing better. She came to London, consulted with the secretary, and kindly offered to pay £15 a year, if he could be taken into the Refuge. With such a history, he was of course taken in.

This lady continued interested in her *protégé*, but did not live to see the result of her benevolent effort, as she was called to her heavenly home in the early part of last year. There no efforts are necessary to feed the hungry or to clothe the naked, because the Lamb in the midst of the throne feeds them. And there God wipes away the tears from the eyes of all who in this life, not only sing with the lips but with the *heart*—

"I *do* believe, I *do* believe,
That Jesus died for me;
That on the Cross He shed His blood,
From sin to set me free."

Ragged School Union.

At the Monthly Meeting of the Managing Committee, held on June 11th, the subscriptions for May were reported to be £388 10s. 11d., and the payments £315 17s. 6d.

Quarterly grants amounting to £132 6s. 10d. were voted to twenty-two schools. Other payments, £103 8s. 1d.

The grant to St. James's Place School increased from £20 to £30 per year. To Lamb and Flag (grant adapted to present operations), £45 6s. 8d. per year. To Holloway School, grant for evening master, £6 6s. To Price's Street School, £15 per year. To Camden Town School, £15 voted.

Applications for grants from Butler's Place, Bermondsey; Buross Street, Commercial Road, E.; Bell Alley, Goswell Road; and Clare-Market Mission.

The subject of issuing the Magazine quarterly, instead of monthly, was considered, and the proposition approved.

Facts and Scraps.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.—One of the most useful of the many agencies of this Ragged School is that of the recently opened Day Nursery for 20 infants. Over each cot is a scroll, on which is painted the name of some wild flower, and an appropriate text. For example, over the "Forget-me-not" cot we have this passage: "Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, they may forget; yet I will not forget thee." This Nursery not only helps poor women who are employed from home, but teaches poor girls *how* to nurse.

JOHN'S PLACE, STEPNEY.—In connection with this Ragged School is a "City Messenger Brigade." They wear a neat uniform, and are stationed at fixed points in the City. So much are their services appreciated that last year they earned £1,650 13s. 8d. Of this large sum they took home £1,400.

ST. GILES'S.—The interest which her Majesty has taken in these Ragged Schools and Refuges has been testified by several donations. We are glad to learn that this interest has descended to her grandchildren. Hence, the last annual meeting was attended by Prince Victor and Prince George of Wales. They were accompanied by their tutor and the private secretary of the Princess of Wales, and remained till the close of the meeting.

MELBOURNE LARRIKINS.—Like London, the capital of Victoria,

Australia, has a large number of rough untamed lads, who are a terror to every one. These boys are known by the police by the general name of "Larrikins." For the temporal welfare of these social waifs, the Melbourne Christian Young Men's Association have just started an organisation called "The Young Traders' Associations." Already, we are glad to learn, many have been won from the evils incident to street life.

SEWING CLASSES. — The Hon. Elizabeth Waldegrave, referring to the sewing-classes of the East London Mission and Relief Society, says: "They are, with a few special exceptions, composed of very poor and respectable widows. The prosperity of the working classes does not affect them, but has rather dried up many little sources of charity which reached to them before. We wish friends could come and witness the eagerness with which these needy ones walk long distances in the coldest weather, and work a whole afternoon to earn sixpence, and their deep gratitude for it. We have now ten classes of from fifty to seventy, but we are anxious to add some more during the next few weeks, at the earnest request of many of those labouring nearly single-handed among the masses of poor around them. For each sovereign sent, two more widows can have work for seven weeks, all extra expenses being met by other sources. Thus, an opportunity is given to others to help many whom they could not otherwise reach, and of seeking out some of the many thousands of uncared-for and unknown ones in this great city."

BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM GARDENS.—The gardens in which Bethnal Green Museum stands were thrown open to the public on Wednesday, the 19th of May. When this museum was transferred by the trustees to the Office of Works, in 1868, one of the conditions was that the space in which it stood should be at once laid out and permanently kept up by the nation as a flower garden and pleasure ground. Owing to some mistake this condition was lost sight of, and it was only in 1873 that any effort was made to redeem this agreement. On the accession of Lord Henry Lennox to office last year this matter was taken in hand, and pushed forward with so much vigour that what was a disgrace to the metropolis has been transformed into another of those open spaces which are now generally admitted to be necessary to the health of the poorer classes.

Notices of Meetings.

GRAY'S YARD, WIGMORE STREET.

The annual meeting of this institution was held on May 19th, at Seymour Hall, Portman Square. Mr. F. A. Bevan presided. Amongst the speakers were Lord Dynevor, Lord Leigh, Sir R. W. Carden; Rev. Drs. Donald Fraser and White; Messrs. J. H. Buckingham and G. Hanbury.

A number of the scholars were on

the platform, and enlivened the meeting by singing several favourite hymns.

From the reports read it appeared the various operations were most successful last year. This was eminently the case with the Ragged Church, which attracts upwards of 300 casuals every Sunday morning. The Sunday Evening School has in winter above 250 in attendance. The Children's Church, held on Sunday morning, is attended by about 40. Large and secular Sewing Classes for girls are conducted by ladies voluntarily. A Night School for boys was opened last winter, thrice weekly: about forty roughs attend regularly. The Penny Bank, Band of Hope, Pure Literature Society, Singing Class, and Mothers' and Dorcas Meetings are as popular as ever. And all are doing a good work in a locality which borders on an Irish colony.

MILTON YARD, ISLINGTON.

The annual meeting of Milton Yard Ragged Schools was held on June 3rd, at Holy Trinity School, Cloudesley Street, under the superintendence of the Rev. R. C. Billing. There was a very good attendance, indeed unusually large for this institution, and this was in a measure due to the presence of some members of Messrs. Moody and Sankey's North London choir, who sang during the evening some of Mr. Sankey's hymns.

The Chairman dwelt upon the purposes of the institution, the chief of which was to gather in young children to give them a religious education. The means to support such an institution were small, and he was happy to say that the need for such institutions was getting less urgent, so far as secular education went, but Milton's Yard had done good work in the past, and would do good work yet in future. Every endeavour was made to utilise the building, and especial effort was devoted to the work that was carried on on Fridays. They had a successful Sunday School, a little Service for Children in the evening, and, he was glad to say, they were fellow-workers with those who were trying to bring the masses to the Saviour. They had week-night classes two evenings a week for girls, and two for boys. During the year, and at a time when there was a Christmas fair at the Agricultural Hall, a number of gipsies were encamped in Milton's Yard, and to these a special tea was given, and an address delivered by Mr. W. T. Paton.

Mr. Bradley, hon. sec., then read the nineteenth annual report, in which it was stated that during the year the school premises had passed into other hands, and the committee had secured a lease of the school from the new owner, but at a greatly increased rent. As the premises required considerable repairs, the committee had used a portion of the building fund for this purpose. It had been determined to devote two nights a week to the religious instruction of the girls instead of one, but up to the present time the change had not been found a success. A Mothers' Meeting was held every Monday afternoon. The Penny Bank had 141 depositors, and the total deposits amounted to £36.

ST. GILES'S.

The twenty-seventh annual meeting of these Ragged Schools and Refuges was held in Exeter Hall, on May 25th, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury. Their

Royal Highnesses Princes Victor and George, the two sons of the Prince of Wales, occupied seats in the side gallery.

A choir of 700 children, under the conduct of Mr. Proudman, entertained an appreciative audience by singing several pieces.

Mr. William Williams, secretary, read extracts from the annual report. The total number of children admitted into the refuges up to the end of 1874 was 5,556—viz., 4,340 boys and 1,216 girls, some of whom were born in Ireland, some in Wales, others in Scotland, Italy, France, East and West Indies, Belgium, United States, Canada, Ceylon, and the remainder in various parts of London and the English counties. The total number of children who have left the refuges for service, &c., from the establishment to the 31st of December, 1874, is 4,901—viz., 3,945 boys and 956 girls. At the end of 1873 the number of inmates of the Boys' Refuge, of the Ship, Farm School, and Shaftesbury School, was 546; the number of new admissions of boys in 1874 was 447; the number of girls in the two Homes at the end of 1873 was 221, and the number of new admissions in 1874, 52. The number of boys placed out in 1874 was 382; the number of girls placed out, 52. Ships were provided for 282 boys on their second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth voyages. All the boys and girls in the Refuges and Ship are fed, clothed, lodged, educated, and trained to earn their own living. The above is the Refuge work. Nearly 600 children have been gratuitously educated in the ragged day, night, and Sunday schools. In the winter months about 9,000 dinners are given to the Ragged School children.

The cash statement showed a total of receipts during the year of £35,587 10s. 1d.; total expenditure £35,306 1s. 5d., leaving a balance in favour of the society amounting to £201 8s. 8d.

RAMSGATE.

On May 20th was held the annual meeting and public examination of the scholars of this Ragged School. The Rev. J. E. Brennan presided.

The report for the year was first read, and from it we take the following:—"The Night Schools have been in operation during the entire year, except the four months from June to the end of September, when many of the children find employment in various ways, during which time, as usual, the Sunday School is open. The number of boys on the books is 82. The number of girls 56. The average number of boys in attendance is about 25, and the average attendance of the girls is also about 25. The funds greatly need augmenting, the expenditure being annually about £20 more than the income."

The examination of the boys and girls then took place, and prizes were distributed, after which addresses were delivered by the Chairman, the Rev. J. M. Braithwaite, Mr. G. Maberly, who recited a piece of poetry composed by himself specially for the occasion, and Dr. Henderson. A letter was read from Sir Moses Montefiore, enclosing a donation of £5, and expressing his best wishes for the prosperity of the schools.

RAGGED SCHOOL BANDS OF HOPE.

UNHAPPILY, England is more known in Central Africa by its rum-casks than by its missionaries. In fact, whenever the latter penetrate into the wilds of paganism, the British merchant speedily follows with the opium-chest and the rum-cask, and thereby does his best to ruin body and soul. No wonder, then, that the Gospel of the grace of God makes so little progress among idolatrous nations, when the high priests of Bacchus do their utmost to petrify the conscience, and render it unable even to understand, much less obey, the message of God to guilty man. Hecatombs are thus sacrificed day by day before the national idol, and the eternal wail of lost souls tells how bitter is the penalty.

That drunkenness is *the* national vice, one fact gleaned from the "Post Office Directory" will prove. Thus it appears that, whilst there are not 5,000 butchers and bakers in London, there are nearly 12,000 gin-palaces or beershops. These placed one after another would stretch from London to Portsmouth, or about 73 miles.

And what is the cost entailed by this abuse of stimulants? Statists estimate that the yearly drink-bill of the United Kingdom amounts to £120,000,000, or nearly double that of the public revenue. This inference is confirmed by the financial statement for the year ending the 31st of March, 1875. The taxes on spirits distilled in the United Kingdom, the malt tax, licences issued to brewers, publicans, &c., produced a net sum of £24,941,605, and the Customs duties on foreign spirits, wine, &c., produced, after deducting repayments on over-entries, damages, &c., a net sum of £7,394,591. The total produce of these taxes, therefore, reached no less than £32,336,196. It is thus seen that a large portion of the national income is derived from the excise duties paid by its drunkards; or, in the words of Mr. Lowe, "these are the patriots who drink England out of its financial difficulties."

The Judicial Statistics for 1874 give a frightful view of the *known*—and they are not a tithe of the unknown—fruits of drunkenness. Thus we find that the number of persons charged before magistrates in England and Wales in 1874 with being drunk, or drunk and disorderly—namely, 182,941—is very nearly double

the number so charged in 1863, in which year it was but 94,745. The increase has been chiefly in the last six of the intervening ten years. In 1867 the number was 100,357; in 1868 it was 111,465; in 1869, 122,310; in 1870, 131,870; in 1871, 142,343; in 1872, 151,084. There are no means of distributing the increase among its causes, whether high wages, stricter police supervision, or other causes; but the number is remarkable. It is sad also to notice the increase among women. In 1867 the number proceeded against comprised 74,860 men and 25,497 women; but in 1874 the numbers were 141,232 men and 41,709 women.

That intemperance is the parent of crime is a self-evident fact. Much of the wife-beating which disgraces the manhood of England is traceable to drunkenness. And when men, Cain-like, imbrue their hands in the blood of wife or child, the plea—rarely merely a pretext, but usually a painful fact—is that it was committed in a drunken fit, and the murderer knows nothing of his crime till he becomes sobered in the prison cell. The like fact of the intimate connection between drunkenness and crime comes to us across the Atlantic. Thus from a work entitled "The Dangerous Classes of New York," by C. L. Brace, we learn that nearly two-thirds of the crimes committed in New York spring from habits of drunkenness. Out of 49,423 criminals who were received into the prisons of that city in 1870, 30,507 were habitual drunkards, and a large part of the 19,000 others were in the habit of getting intoxicated occasionally. In the penitentiary at Albany also, there were 1,093 prisoners during the same year, of whom 893 owned to being drunkards. And not the least of the sad results of this vice is this—that of the street arabs of New York, 90 per cent. were ascertained to be the children of known drunkards.

Without discussing the vexed question whether the habitual use of stimulants by adults is advisable or not—a topic scarcely fitted for our pages—there cannot be two opinions as to their use by children being unwarrantable; yet in our travels through London no more distressing spectacle is witnessed than this—*mothers* giving their babies the gin-glass to sip! No wonder, then, that there are so many adults drunkards, when they were initiated into the vice by their own parents, and that in childhood. More than once we have been told by Ragged scholars that "gin *must* be good, for see how mother likes it!"

Whilst we leave the "how and the why" to check adult

intemperance with the Permissive Bill men and teetotallers at large, we think that something ought and may be done to check the formation of the habit in children. In so doing, *no* plan except that true conversion which not only saves but sanctifies, can compare with Bands of Hope. Of these there are now about 350 in London, and they include many thousands of Ragged and Sunday scholars.

Bands of Hope are conducted in forty-four Ragged Schools. Of these, thirty-four returned an aggregate membership of 3,603. Estimating that the remaining ten have the same average number of members, this would show that 4,663 little abstainers belong to our schools—or nearly one out of every five of our scholars. Every scholar who has attained the age of six years is eligible to sign the following simple pledge:—"I promise to drink no intoxicating drinks, and to get others to do the same." The following are the rules which have been found most workable, and we give them in case other Ragged Schools—and we hope that their name will be "Legion"—should be led to copy the example thus set by so many Ragged Schools, not only in London but in the provinces:—

1. A weekly meeting shall be held of the members to recite or sing temperance pieces, and to hear addresses on temperance.
2. The members are expected to be punctual and regular in their attendance, and do all they can to preserve order.
3. The pledge may be signed before or after the meeting, but no one under ten can sign it without the consent of one of the parents.
4. There shall be a monthly meeting in the winter months for recitation, singing, &c., to which the parents shall be invited.

The third rule is of the greatest importance; for not only is parental authority thereby supported, but during the visitation required they receive an unmistakable *hint* that if they really yearn for better homes and happier lives, they must patronise the savings bank and the house of prayer rather than the gin-palace. Many, we are glad to say, have thus been won to sobriety who were once, from their drunken habits, a terror to the locality.

The Band of Hope attached to Ann Street Ragged School has

added to the abstinence pledge one against tobacco-smoking. Considering how mere boys have formed this evil habit, and how their vigour is sapped thereby at the very outset of life, we hope that this step in advance will be taken by every Ragged School Band of Hope.

We have visited many Bands of Hope, and gladly bear our testimony to the cheerfulness and *life* which reigned in the gatherings. At Ogle Mews, in the west, we have seen 120, and at Mansfield Street, in the south, nearly 300 gathered at the monthly meeting, including some parents. One of the most attractive features of the last-named Band of Hope is the large library—given by an earnest teetotaller — which is strictly *limited* to temperance works. At all these Ragged Schools the evenings were pleasantly and profitably spent in singing temperance melodies; by lectures, with simple experiments on alcohol; or by addresses, garnished with striking anecdotes, calculated to win recruits to the goodly army of "King Water." At the larger meetings the parents were invited to attend. In every case the meetings closed with earnest prayer.

It is sometimes asked—"But do these youthful teetotallers *keep* the pledge when they leave the Ragged School?" That some break the pledge when away from the influence of the school we doubt not, and considering the "drinking customs" of labouring men, as well as the other temptations to which they are exposed, we cannot wonder at this. But some of the conductors of our pioneer Band of Hope — that at Gray's Yard Ragged School—know those who have kept it upwards of twenty years, and who ascribe their ascent up the social ladder to their faithfulness to their boyish pledge.

From these facts and figures it may be inferred what a potent weapon is the Ragged Band of Hope in slaying the Goliath of drink. Conducted as they are by earnest Christian men, there is no fear that they will ignore that Gospel of the grace of God which can alone save the soul; or so supplant the Gospel by teetotalism as to practically teach that the one can replace the other. For they well know that (Matt. xii. 43-45), however much the "house be swept and garnished," yet if the soul be empty of Christ, seven demons more wicked than that one formerly expelled will speedily occupy the vacuum, to the eternal ruin of the soul.

TOWER HAMLETS MISSION,

GLOBE ROAD, MILE END.

THE Tower Hamlets, which were once, as their name indicates, a cluster of pretty rural districts, lying east of the Tower of London, now comprise nearly the whole of that teeming portion of the great metropolis known as the East End. The inhabitants of the Tower Hamlets are composed chiefly of the working classes. In many districts the proportion of the lower or criminal class is decidedly great and by no means easy to reach. The object of the Tower Hamlets Mission is to spread the Gospel among these thousands of the lapsed masses. Much has been done, but there is still more than ever to do. The Master has graciously given great success to those of His servants who have laboured in this part of London; but great as have been these successes, they are as nothing compared with the ever-increasing tide of immorality and crime.

This Mission, which is specially devoted to evangelistic work among boys, has now been carried on for five years; and has, during its existence, done much *real* work. People who are at all acquainted with the East End, are aware that the rough lads of this quarter associate in gangs, and, with the worst character among them for a leader, are ready to commit all kinds of wickedness. Often, when times are hard, they do not scruple to steal. This Mission, in God's hands, has been the means of breaking up several of these gangs; and many lads who, a short time ago, were model East End roughs—some even worse than this—are now respectable youths in good situations—transformed in their outward as well as inward man, and firmly established in the faith.

The Boys' Hall is filled every Sunday evening. Over 200 boys enjoy listening to the "Old, Old Story," often put forth by those who have been their boon companions in sin, whose walk they know to be consistent with their testimony. One of the most pleasing features in connection with this branch of the work is that it is no uncommon thing to find as good a congregation on week-days as on Sundays. The Girls' Hall is also well attended, and a very successful work has been carried on by sisters whose souls have been enlightened through attending the preaching at the Conference Hall. There are no less than ten services held at the different stations for children during the week.

Attached to the Boys' Mission Hall is the Boys' Home, through which over 140 destitute boys have been housed, fed, and cared for, and many have passed to various spheres of industry.

The Shoeblack and Wood-chopping Brigades afford constant employment to many a poor outcast, and have often proved the first step to better things. Here it is that the poor, destitute boys find a home, and none are ever refused admission. Upon application they are received, and their cases investigated *afterwards*.

The present Central Hall is a temporary iron building, capable of holding about 700 people, known as the East End Conference Hall. It has been filled ever since its erection two years ago, and the blessing still continues, for scarcely a week has passed but we have seen the fruit of the preached Gospel. There are also two smaller halls where the Gospel is preached to the people, and where God has exalted himself in the conversion of sinners.

Besides the above, the young have always had special care and attention, and they form no small part of these evangelistic labours. Many, many are the encouraging facts that might be related of the good done among them.

Tent meetings have for two seasons been held on a piece of land which is one of the finest sites in the East End, but has hitherto been anything but an ornament to the neighbourhood. The largest portion of it has been used for years by travelling showmen, with waxworks, merry-go-rounds, penny theatres, and every conceivable kind of low exhibition. The local authorities, and especially the police, consider a great boon has been conferred upon the neighbourhood. They have expressed their thankfulness at the purchase of this piece of land, and the removal of the dilapidated buildings which stood there; while the respectable inhabitants hail with delight the demolition of the old place which had afforded such great facilities for persons of the lowest character. Here God has glorified himself in the conversion of many. These services in winter are transferred to the Foresters' Music Hall, holding 3,000 persons. The hall is situated in a low locality, commonly known as Dog Row. The vicinity abounds in dog-keepers, pigeon-flyers, bird-catchers, and persons of this class. Ned Wright was the preacher on the opening day, when the hall was well filled both afternoon and evening—a large proportion of them being of the class above mentioned.

Another important feature of this work has been brought about by the amalgamation of the Free Gospel and Medical Mission, which for years has been carried on under the honorary superintendence of Mr. George Hamilton. The great object of this work will be to carry out the Master's command, "Preach the kingdom of God, and heal the sick." Whilst the patients are waiting, some one will always be there to point them to the Great Physician, "who healeth all our diseases." For this part of the work the services of an earnest

Christian brother have been obtained, and on January 1st Dr. Wallace entered upon his new field of labour for the Lord.

Few works have made such rapid progress in so short a time, and the work is now so large that the committee are compelled to erect a Great Central Hall, with a British Workman public-house, and Pure Literature Depôt, to be built upon the land already mentioned in our account of the Tent Services, and for which the sum of £3,500 has been paid. The hall will be built to hold about 2,500 people. This British Workman and public-house will have all the attraction of the modern gin-palace without the intoxicating drinks, instead of which good meals, tea, coffee, &c., will be provided. A great evil exists in the present mode of carrying on benefit societies, as the clubs are generally formed and the meetings held at some public-house, where the men are tempted to spend their money in drink. This will be counteracted by starting a similar society, and thus, by the great principal of self-help and independence, the working classes may see that Christians do not neglect their temporal necessities.

Among the warm supporters of this Mission are the Treasurer and three Vice-Presidents of the Ragged School Union. They have contributed £1,500 towards the building fund.

OUR LEGISLATORS AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.

AT a time when so many educationists either ignore or coolly deny the great work done by Ragged Schools, it is satisfactory to find that they have so made their *mark* that new recruits are being won to the movement, and that our old friends still give their staunch support. This will be seen by the following speeches by members of the two houses of legislature.

The first address, in behalf of Gray's Yard Ragged School, was delivered at the thirty-sixth annual meeting of that school, held on May 19th ult.

Lord DYNEVOR observed that that was the first time he had attended a meeting of that kind, although he had been a subscriber to several societies for something like forty-five years. Previously, his attention had not been called much to Ragged Schools; but, having his residence in Portman Square, his attention had been directed to the Gray's Yard Ragged Schools, and he was induced to attend that meeting. He was very glad that he had come at last. They all knew the saying, "Better late than never." He should certainly become a subscriber, because he was convinced that the work in which they were engaged was a good one. He was an old man, as they could see by his grey hair, but still he should like to live a little longer, if it was but to assist the schools, and encourage others to do the same. He remembered seeing in the Royal Academy two pictures. The first represented children, wives, and sisters, wandering in the streets, with countenances upon which could

be seen malice, envy, and hatred, and the children looked more like young rascals. But the second picture presented a different aspect, and joy, and peace, and comfort irradiated the faces of the group. So, no doubt, it was with that Society; and that it had worked great changes for the best, because it took care of the little children, and brought them to a knowledge of their Saviour. He impressed on his hearers the emphatic words of Him who died for sinners, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He was glad to hear of the good done by the Society, and that the wretched ragged children had, to some extent, disappeared. He was also much pleased at seeing the children on the platform with good clothes on, and cleanly appearance. Ragged Schools wanted to catch them when young, because then they could be trained up with more benefit to themselves and the community. They were anxious that the child should not only begin well, but go on well. He recollected hearing an anecdote told by a clergyman from the pulpit. It was to the effect that a lady was about entering a church, and seeing a young woman passing the door, asked her to go inside. She ultimately did so. The sermon was a practical one, and she went away very deeply impressed with it. The lady subsequently called upon the young woman, and asked if she had a Bible, and the young woman replied that she had parted with it, and the lady gave her one. That lady had occasion to go to a hospital after that, and one of the nurses said, "Ma'am, I think this is your Bible." The lady asked the nurse where she obtained it, when the nurse replied, "I had it from a young woman who was run over this morning, who is since dead; but she lived long enough to say that she died happy." He mentioned that to show the effect of religion. Another proof of penitence was that a letter was found in her pocket, written to her friends, stating that she had been brought to a knowledge of the Saviour. At the last moment, as it were, that poor young woman's soul was saved.

The Right Hon. W. F. COWPER TEMPLE, M.P., an old friend of Ragged Schools, addressed the thirty-third annual meeting of Field Lane Ragged School, on 8th June ult.

He said that he had much pleasure in taking part in the thirty-third anniversary of that valuable institution, which, with its twenty branches, caught hold of all the suffering people within its reach, which drew them out of the depths of the degradation into which they had fallen, and transformed them into a most happy condition. If those whom he addressed cast their thoughts backward for these thirty-three years, what a number of pale and squalid faces would seem to arise before the mind's eye, what thousands of little ones, to whom this world had been but a dreary wilderness, without holiness, comfort, or rest, would appear before them; and then let them think how they had been rescued from their degradation and wretchedness, to that knowledge and blessedness which that institution was intended to confer. The patient and laborious workers who had done so much for

these children, who taught them how to get their own living, and lead honest and respectable lives, had their own reward, for when they clothed the naked, and fed the hungry, they were following the example of our Lord, who had always identified himself with and cared more for the one sheep that had strayed than for the ninety and nine who were not lost. He thanked God that his noble relative (Lord Shaftesbury) in the chair had been spared so that, with his warm heart and compassion for the suffering, he had been enabled to favour the institution for thirty-two years, uninterruptedly, with his sympathising presence. (Loud applause.)

One generation had since passed away, and what changes had come over that neighbourhood in these thirty-two years! The Field Lane institution was prepared to change with the times, and to adapt itself to the altered circumstances of the case. Rate-paid and state-aided schools now stretched forth their arms to receive poor children; but, nevertheless, instead of Ragged Schools being no longer needed, they had a special work before them. They alone could supply that loving teaching of Christianity which could not be expected from schools under the control of the State, for in such schools there must be a neutrality in religion. He was thankful that the Bible School of that institution supplied what could not be got in a school supported by the rates of a whole parish, and here, therefore, was a field which remained to be amply cultivated. He was told lately, by a German gentleman, that in Germany the result of the training of the teachers was that nine-tenths of the teachers were sceptics—(hear, hear)—and that they merely taught the Bible as a history, of which every educated person should have knowledge. He thought that all who cared for education should concentrate their attention more on Sunday schools, for that was the quarter where patience and labour were most required—where the harvest would be reaped, and where patient labour would meet with its greatest reward.

He attached the greatest value to the Industrial Schools. In those schools the dullest child was able to see that his teacher was actuated by love, which had its origin in heaven, although it was manifested on earth. In the wealthiest of cities there were always the abodes of the deepest poverty; and so in London political economists said, "Don't give any money away, or you may do harm where you intend to do good;" so that one must be thankful that there existed an institution such as this, which could not make professional beggars, but which, when successful, converted the unfortunate into promising members of society.

He was thankful to learn, from the report, that the Sovereign herself had shown her appreciation of that humble institution by sending it a donation—(applause)—which showed her discretion and wisdom in selecting that institution for her approbation. He trusted it would never want friends, he trusted it would never want workers, and that the success that had attended it in the past would mark its career in the future.

EMIGRATION OF POOR CHILDREN.

We should be slow and circumspect in criticism, when we venture to deal with such efforts as those of Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson! These ladies have for years been engaged in the holy task of snatching starvelings from London streets and British workhouses, and finding them comfortable homes in Canada. Miss Macpherson has led 2,000 poor children forth from misery in England to comfort in Canada; and Miss Rye has in the same way been the pioneer of 1,000 young women, and 1,377 children. The mass of these unfortunates have turned out excellently well. There have been failures—for in some 5,000 persons will be found, sift the human family as you may, a score or so of ne'er-do-weels; but, in the main, the work of the two devoted ladies has borne such fruit as all our social doctors at home have not yet managed to produce on native soil. That the result was sound and useful all who had closely watched the proceedings of Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson, knew full well; but it appeared to the home authorities there was reason to inspect it officially.

Mr. Andrew Doyle, the Inspector of the Local Government Board, was sent out to Canada last summer to report on the results of the emigration of pauper children; and the results of his investigation were issued in February last. His opinion was highly unfavourable to Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson. This opinion was forwarded by the home authorities to the Canadian Government; and we have now before us the report of the Canadian Committee of Emigration on Mr. Doyle's verdict. This committee has investigated the subject thoroughly, as Mr. Doyle did not investigate it; and the consequence is the complete rehabilitation of the two ladies whom the English inspector treated with suspicion, and whom he condemned on mere scraps of evidence. Mr. Lowe, Secretary to the Department of Agriculture and Immigration, makes these remarks on Mr. Doyle's report:—

"Mr. Doyle in substance charges these ladies with failing in the responsibility which they have undertaken with regard to the workhouse children, in that they have not maintained the care and supervision over them which they have promised. He intimates, as a consequence, that some of the girls have gone wholly to destruction, and some of the boys to the gaols. He states that many of the children are placed in unsuitable situations, and required to do work for which they are wholly unfitted. The 'homes' he considers insufficient for their requirements, and that the supervision or inspection of the children, after they are placed out, is of the loosest possible character. In fact, he gives it to be understood that the system

amounts to nothing more than just scattering the children broadcast here and there, and losing sight of them, under conditions in which in many cases improper advantages may be and are taken of them. He does not give any information as to the number of children who are doing well, or the proportion of failures to the whole; but he makes the general statement that 'nine-tenths of the children who have been brought out are still in service, and it remains to be seen how they will turn out.' No evidence whatever is adduced to show that so large a proportion as one-tenth of the children is out of service. Of the nine-tenths in service Mr. Doyle says further: 'The prospects of a considerable number of them are, no doubt, promising. Of the prospects of a still greater number no one can honestly say anything one way or the other, so little is known of them.' Of the 'adopted' children he states that about 10 per cent. of the very young are very happily placed in respectable families. It may be remarked that Mr. Doyle does not classify in his observations the pauper children from workhouses, and those who have been picked up by the ladies from the streets; and, further, that he states that he did not make an inspection of more than 400 cases, which only form about one-eighth part of the whole of the children brought out by these ladies."

To pronounce on the system after a cursory inspection of one-eighth of the emigrants under it is rash, to say the least of it. But when Mr. Doyle goes on to insinuate that Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson are not so much philanthropists, but shrewd women doing a very pretty stroke of business in pauper emigration, he assumes a responsibility which only the sternest and best attested facts can justify. In this report he inferred that these ladies received at least £5 or £6 more than they paid out.

These assertions were successfully rebutted by the ladies in their examination before the Canadian committee; and the rebuttal is endorsed by Mr. Gordon, M.P., and other persons of position in Canada. It is proved that the children have prospered, with the exception of some three per cent.; that the ladies have not made one farthing profit on their labour; and that, in short, all Mr. Doyle's charges against them are indefensible. We dwell on this subject at some length because we have often commended the Christian work which Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson have undertaken.

Mr. Doyle is unfortunate even in his suggestions, as Mr. Lowe points out:—

"The conditions which he considers necessary are receiving houses or 'industrial establishments' under Government control, where the children would receive a few years' training in Canada before being placed out, and periodical inspection afterwards. I think the

'industrial establishments' which he proposes would be really an extension into this country of the English workhouse system, and that it would not be found to be satisfactory. I think it would be altogether unsuited to the ideas and condition of the people of this country. If the children are properly placed, the sooner they are absorbed into the population of Canada—that is, if they are such as should be at all brought to the country—the better; and that the less they have of any workhouse or 'industrial establishment' mark to distinguish them from the ordinary children of this country, the better."

The instinct of the two good ladies who have found homes at once for their *protégés* is the true, and sound, and womanly one. An adopted home is the best orphan school. It is to be hoped that the unfortunate meddling and muddling of Gwydyr House will not slacken the flow of money from the charitable, nor the other sources of revenue by which Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson are enabled to find for the homeless outcasts of our great cities, comfortable firesides in the Canadian Dominion.—*Lloyd's Newspaper.*

[We are glad to find that this attempt to *strangle* with red tape so praiseworthy an attempt to rid London of some of its *baby* waifs and strays has thus signally failed. *All* the Ragged Schools in the East of London who have placed children under the care of Miss Macpherson speak most highly of the kindness and wisdom displayed by that lady in placing out the children.—ED.]

AN ABSTRACT OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT ON RAGGED SCHOOLS IN THE EAST AND NORTH OF LONDON,

BY MR. CURTIS.

IN the North and East there are eighty-five institutions. Last year I paid them 907 visits.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

were conducted by eighty-six institutions. Forty-three meet on Sunday mornings, with an average attendance of 2,600. Sixty-six meet in the afternoon, with an attendance of 7,800. The fifty-six which meet in the evening have an average attendance of 8,700.

Total average attendance, 16,500.

The number of voluntary teachers is about 1,600; average attendance about 1,100.

The *Bible Classes* are twenty-seven. Scholars, 669. Some of these are

systematically conducted. In all the subject of study for the following Sunday is made known.

The number of *Libraries* is forty-three, with 10,000 volumes. The books in most are eagerly sought after.

Prayer Meetings are conducted in forty-five schools; some of these every Sabbath, others monthly. Some hold alternate Prayer Meetings for scholars and adults.

Private Conversation Meetings continue to be held with those who appear to be the subjects of serious impressions, and from several schools the churches have been enriched with young and promising converts.

Day Schools.

The secular Day Schools are divisible into nine Boys', eight Girls, thirty Mixed and Infant Schools; making forty-seven distinct schools. The number registered is about 6,000; of these, 4,216 were present at my annual examinations, of whom 2,624 were examined,

These Day Schools are taught by 47 paid teachers, who are aided by 212 paid monitors and assistants.

The results of my examinations were as follows:—

Present, 4,216. Examined, 2,624. Reading: good, 696; moderate, 235; fair, 416 = 1,347. Writing: good, 505; moderate, 304; fair, 542 = 1,351. Scripture: good, 565; moderate, 561 = 1,126. *Rules.*—Arithmetic, simple: First, 1,236; second, 783; third, 604; fourth, 410; fifth (long division), 188. Arithmetic, compound: First, 267; second, 181; third, 132; fourth, 99; fifth (long division), 85. Tables: multiplication, 839; money, 363. Notation: Three figures, 939; four and upwards, 534.

Notation is a difficulty, as may be seen, for 1,236 passed in simple addition out of 2,624 pupils, while 939 only passed in notation of three figures, so that in most cases the sums were set, not dictated; if they had been, it is clear that three or four hundred less would have been the number that passed.

Night Schools

were conducted by fifty-six institutions during the past year.

There were twenty-nine Boys', twenty-six Girls', and twenty-nine Mixed. Twenty-seven were conducted by voluntary teachers, twenty-four by paid teachers aided by voluntary teachers, and thirty-three by paid masters or mistresses only.

Flower Shows

continue to be held, but are not so numerous as might be in connection with our schools. This may in some measure be attributable to the fact of their being held for a district, to which many neighbourhoods contribute.

The flowers exhibited at one of the schools were mostly geraniums, calceolarias, fuchsias, and bouquets of wild flowers tastefully arranged by the elder children. There were about one hundred exhibitors. The highest prize was three shillings and sixpence; the lowest, threepence. Baroness Burdett Coutts and Lady Bodkin furnished a fine display of exotics and evergreens from their conservatories for the decoration of the rooms. As

showing the sweet results arising from the commingling of classes brought about by Flower Shows, the following anecdote is related.

"As I mixed among the exhibitors," says Lord Shaftesbury, "I felt a little hand playing with mine, and a little girl looked up in my face, and said, 'Please, sir, may I give you a kiss?' I said, 'I am sure you may, my dear; and I'll give you one too.'"

Industrial Exhibitions.

A most successful one was held by King Edward Street. The number of exhibitors was eighty. The articles exhibited displayed great taste, ingenuity, and executive ability. The report states that among the successful competitors were the exhibitors of three chairs. For dining-room, mahogany, stuffed seat covered with horsehair. Workman's parlour chair, with cane bottom. A hall chair, wood bottom.

A kitchen table, with flaps on hinges, and drawer complete. A mangle in working order, with fly-wheel. A loo table, with 2,259 separate pieces of wood, on a pillar with four claws.

Besides these was a group of models of buildings, one in wood of the Albert Street Ragged School; in cardboard, a village of eleven buildings, including church, windmill, &c., besides which were many other models, toys, shoe and clothes brushes, and specimens of tailoring, dressmaking, and other needlework.

Industrial Classes.

There are thirty-seven, with an attendance of about 1,500. Some of these are held in the evening, and for the future must in a larger degree be held in the evening, or they must decline, owing to the smaller number of our Day Schools.

Children's Dinners.

Two more schools have adopted this excellent mode of mitigating the sufferings of poor children. Many poor famished ones obtain by this arrangement one or two substantial meals. Some 5,000 dinners weekly are distributed in this way. Very many of our schools provide a good substantial meal for the children on Christmas Day.

Bands of Hope

are twenty-seven, with about 4,000 members.

Ragged Churches

are forty, with about 2,300 members.

Parents' Meetings

are forty-six, with an attendance of 1,800.

Penny Readings and Lectures

continue to be conducted successfully by several of our institutions.

Penny Banks.

Notwithstanding the facilities offered in other quarters, our banks continue to flourish. The number in my districts is fifty-five, with deposits to the amount of £6,000, and 12,000 depositors.

Clothing Clubs.

The number of these is twenty-seven. These clubs have contributed greatly to the tidy appearance of the children, especially the girls. In connection with these, the periodic sales of new and cast-off clothing deserve mention. It is from the sale of the cast-off clothing that the fund arises from which the bonuses that are given to the members of the club is derived.

Coal Clubs and Coal Depôts.

These have been continued and multiplied this winter, to the great advantage of the suffering poor.

The *Loan Funds*, *Emily Funds*, *Barrow and Donkey Clubs*, are found eminently useful in assisting poor people in connection with their various callings and trades, especially the costers.

The Emily Fund was established in connection with several of our schools by Lord Shaftesbury, as a memorial to his deceased wife. This fund is intended for loans to poor girls who principally live by selling flowers. It has proved a great boon to such, and that its help has not been ill bestowed is shown by the repayments of the money lent.

In conclusion, permit me to state that great attention has been paid by our various institutions to the spiritual condition of our scholars, in order to utilise such spiritual results as may accrue. Fox Court has instituted a Juvenile Mission Band, the members of which are expected to use their influence upon their companions and workfellows.

Finally, the Ragged School Institution has been so fraught with benefit to poor children and their parents, is so flexible in its organisations, and has such power of adaptability to altered circumstances, that it seems unwarrantable to lose heart at the cloud that threatens it. The lines of the poet are true, not only in reference to individuals, but also to institutions, that

> "Behind a frowning Providence
> God hides a smiling face."

To thank God for the successes of the past, and have faith in him for the future—not to repose in indolence, but from difficulty to gather incentives to future exertion—is our manifest duty.

RISEN FROM THE RANKS.

At the annual meeting of the Stockwell Orphanage (Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's) two interesting cases were related of poor boys who had risen from the ranks. They beautifully illustrate the maxim of Holy Writ (Prov. xviii. 16), "A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men." At the same time they serve to show that when a poor or outcast boy is taken by the hand of Christian kindness we cannot tell whether we are not helping some modern

Luther to begin a career of usefulness such as the world can never forget. For let it never be forgotten that the illustrious Reformer had to sing Christmas carols in the streets to pay for his education.

In the course of his speech the Earl of Shaftesbury, who presided, referred to the many instances of excellent men who had been brought up in such institutions as the one in which they were assembled. He related with deep feeling the story of a lad who had been picked up as a poor ragged child in the street by a lady in Notting Hill, and who, sent in the first instance to the Ragged School and Refuge in Great Queen Street, had subsequently been trained for the merchant service on board the *Chichester*. One of the leading bankers in London had lately brought to his lordship's knowledge the fact that this lad, at sixteen, had been of inestimable service in administering spiritual help to a nephew of the banker's who died on board ship in the voyage from India. The Earl declared that no matter how deep down you may dive in the social scale, you will be sure to bring up some of the most brilliant jewels that have adorned and dignified humanity.

The statement received a striking confirmation in a story related by the Rev. J. P. Chown, who told of a boy he had first known as a poor lad in Bradford. He was a milk-boy, and some kind ladies at whose house he called with milk, undertook to teach him his letters—teaching him at first a letter a day. By-and-by he became animated by such a love of learning that he asked him (Mr. Chown) if he could get him into the College at Bradford as shoeblack, as he hoped by this means he might be assisted to a little more learning. He got the lad his wish, and he was certainly the most diligent student in the College. Some of the students helped him, and he was getting on famously, when an American professor happened to visit the institution, and, hearing the tale, asked the lad if he would like to go with him when he returned to America. This offer was eagerly embraced; the lad crossed the sea, continued his studies, and took his degree. When Mr. Chown, shortly after the close of the war, visited the United States, this youth came with a carriage to meet him at the docks; and not long ago Mr. Chown received a visit from Mr. Chase, a grandson of the celebrated Judge Chase, who came with a letter of introduction from their common friend, the Bradford milk-boy!

Many such cases are reported, not only by the British but Foreign Ragged Schools. And low down in the social mire we shall still find many a vein of gold far more precious than the nuggets found in the quartz of California. But for this we must dig deep, and dig in patient faith. Then shall we find that (Gen. ii. 12) "the gold of that land is good!"

Hints for Teachers.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

"God's seed," said holy Samuel Rutherford, "will come to God's harvest." He expressed in these words his own faith and the settled faith of the church of God. We have copied these words that they may meet the eyes and encourage the hearts of laborious but discouraged Ragged School teachers.

To work heartily and hopefully, a man must believe that his work will produce fruit. Then it becomes a work of faith, and thus also a labour of love. Without it, it must be the dreariest of drudgeries, enlivened by no ray of cheering hope. Let this faith be fixed in the heart, and animate in all the labour that God's seed will come to God's harvest.

Years ago, when the writer was himself a Sunday School boy, he was a witness to a remarkable fulfilment of this declaration of the holy man of God. It was a church in one of the eastern counties of Pennsylvania, around which there lies one of the most beautiful valleys which the eye of man has ever gazed upon. The golden haze of summer rested upon green fields and whitening harvests, and the soft breeze came gently through the great oaks by which the church was surrounded. Within, the teachers and scholars gathered themselves together, and as they met they seemed to each other to wear a more serious mien than usual. A hymn was sung and prayer offered, evidently with repressed emotions. But when the teachers turned to address their classes the struggling feelings began to find vent. Tears flowed from many eyes, and the stillness of the place was disturbed by sobs and murmured words of penitential distress. Teachers forgot their usual lessons in the anxiety to point their pupils to the cross of Jesus, and the scholars listened absorbingly to words which had often been spoken to them before, but never, as they thought, so tenderly and persuasively. When the superintendent arose, and with faltering voice began a brief address, there came a fresh burst of emotion, and the place became a place of weeping and of bitter lamentation for sin.

It was a Sunday School revival, growing out of a great revival in the church, and very many and precious are the fruits which were then gathered. There are some faithful disciples now upon missionary ground who were in that school on that day. Others are preaching the Gospel in many parts of their native land. Others still abide in the homes and worship in the church of their fathers, and are walking as examples of the flock. The great day only can declare how great and blessed were the results of that Sabbath School revival, but its memory can never be effaced from some minds and hearts.

It was, however—and this is a hint for discouraged Ragged School teachers—the harvest of a long laborious year, yea, years of toil and anxiety. Despondency had often been written on the faces of the teachers. A few had given up the effort, hopeless of any good. Those

who struggled on seemed to grow weary as they looked for returning fruit and found it not. But all care, anxiety, and labour were more than repaid by this abundant ingathering.

Let every discouraged one toil on. If others are to reap the harvest, let it be so. Only be sure and work in faith that God's seed will end ultimately in God's harvest—and that at the *right* time. So "learn to labour and to *wait*." E.

DO YOU PULL IN YOUR NETS?

CHRIST says, "I will make you 'fishers of men.'" Peter had a good haul on the day of Pentecost. I doubt if he ever caught so many fish in one day as he did men on that day of Pentecost. Why, it would have broken every net they had on board, if they had had to drag up three thousand fishes. He said, "Follow me, Peter, and I will make you a fisher of men," and Peter simply obeyed him, and there, on that day of Pentecost, we see the result.

There is one reason, and a great reason, why so many do not succeed. I have been asked by a great many good men, "Why is it we don't have any results? We work hard, pray hard, and preach hard, and yet the success does not come." I will tell you. It is because a good many people spend all their time *mending their nets*. No wonder they never catch anything.

If you have an inquiry-meeting, pull the net in, and see if you have caught anything. If you are always mending and setting the net, you won't catch many fish. Whoever heard of a man going out to fish, and setting his net, and then letting it stop there, and never pulling it in. Why, everybody would laugh at the man's folly. There was a man down in Manchester, who came to me one day, and said, "I wish you would tell me why we ministers don't succeed better than we do." So I took up the idea of pulling in the net, and I said, "You ought to pull in your nets." I said, "There are many in Manchester who can preach much better than I can, but then I pull in the net." A great many people have objections to inquiry-meetings, and when I had pointed out the importance of them, the minister said, "I never did pull in the net, I will try next Sunday morning." He did so, and eight persons, anxious inquirers, went into his study. The next Sunday he came down to see me, and said he had never had such a Sunday in his life. Why, he was going right up into the mountains. The next time he drew the net there were forty, and when he came to see me at the Opera-house the other day, he said, "Moody, I have had eight hundred conversions this last year. It is a great mistake I did not begin earlier to pull in the net."

So, my friends, if you want to catch men, just pull in the net. If you only catch one, it will be something. It may be a little child, but I have known a little child convert a whole family. Why, you don't know what's in that little dull-headed boy in the inquiry-room, he may become a Martin Luther—a reformer that shall make the world tremble, you cannot tell. God uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty.

God's promise is as good as a Bank of England note—"I promise to pay so and so," and here is one of

Christ's promissory notes—"If you will follow me, I will make you fishers of men." Will you not lay hold of the promise, and trust it and follow him?

D. L. MOODY.

Children's Page.

"GIVE ME A CHANCE."

J. M. had waited two or three hours to see the master of Field Lane Night School. What did he want? He shall tell the story of his life.

"I have come, sir, to see if you will assist me. I have been in prison three times, but am now most anxious to give up my course of life, and have been told by one you helped eight months ago, that you would help me. I attended the Night School occasionally, three years ago."

He was told nothing could be done without seeing his father. At this the lad seemed staggered, but after a pause, said "he would try."

On Monday a respectable old man came and asked if a lad named J. M. had called upon the master. Having satisfied him on this point he was asked a few particulars of the lad's history.

He said in reply, "that for eighteen months his son had never slept one night in his home; and that through bad company he had got himself into prison. That his mother was dead, and that, instead of his being a comfort to him, he had almost broken his heart," and the big tears rolled down the old man's cheek.

He was asked how he knew his son had been to the master? He said, "About eight months ago you sent one of his companions into the Royal Navy. The lad had come home on leave, and inquiring for my son, found he was just coming out of prison." The sailor finding out the day of his discharge, waited his companion's coming out, when each was delighted to meet the other. After mutual questioning, with sailor-like frankness he said, "Why not give up this life? see how comfortable I am now to what I was!" "Yes, but no one will help me," was the reply. "Why not? Go to Field Lane School as I did, and tell the schoolmaster that I sent you." "In consequence of this, my son," said the father, "came to you, and you sent him to me. He did not come to me himself, but induced a neighbour to ask me to come to see you."

The father was asked if he would like to see his son; he replied, "I should." The master took him to a corner of the room and there introduced him. The lad was ashamed of his conduct—the father with open hand clasped that of his boy, and to relieve his feelings, suffered the tears to run down his careworn cheeks. "Oh! yes, sir, he will do well now, won't you, Jem?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy, "give me a chance, and I will never go to prison again."

By God's mercy, in forty-eight

hours he was out of the way of temptation as a sailor in H.M. Navy.

He and his friend called shortly after to visit the school; he was as fine a specimen of the British sailor as any in H.M. service.

OUR LITTLE HOME MISSIONARIES.

MANY of our scholars are quite little *home* missionaries. How can this be, you ask? In this way—they repeat the Bible lesson, or the text daily taught in the Ragged School, to their parents. By this means many wicked drunken fathers and mothers have been won for Jesus.

The following two cases will show how well our scholars obey the law of God (1 Tim. v. 4), "Show piety at home."

A poor woman told us that her son had committed the 23rd Psalm to memory after coming from the Ragged School. He often collected around him about a dozen children, and repeated it verse by verse till almost all knew it. "I and my husband," she said, "know it all, and neither of us can read or write."

A poor widow said to us, "Oh, how glad I am to hear my little girl repeat at night the Scripture text she has learned during the day! The other night I was casting about in my mind to think where to get any food (she had not had any for twenty-four hours), when my little girl, seven years old, said to me, 'Mother, the text to-day was, "Trust in God."' At this I took courage, looked up to God, and presently a friend brought me work for a fortnight."

Now, where would these successful little home missionaries have been had they never entered a Ragged School? Rolling in the "mire and the gutter," or in the still worse mire of sin. May we not, then, well echo the motto which speaks from the walls at every Ragged School tea-meeting—"God bless our Ragged Schools!"

S. A.

Correspondence.

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—The council of this society, in whose name I write, are convinced by every day's experience that Workmen's Clubs and Institutes properly managed are calculated largely to promote the welfare of the people of this country. There could hardly be a more important aim than that of enabling the working population to deliver themselves from the evil of public-house resort, and at the same time to find opportunities for mental culture, for refined recreation, and for the judicious investment of their savings.

These objects are being accomplished by many of the institutions, the establishment and management of which "The Working Men's

Club and Institute Union" seeks, in various ways, to promote throughout England. The council therefore invite the co-operation of all social reformers and philanthropists, of whatever class or profession. They offer copies of their publications, their advice, and their personal services, without charge, to every one interested in this work.

They particularly desire, through the publication of this letter, to obtain the services of "corresponding members"—in other words, the council invite men of all classes, clergymen, laymen, artisans, and others, to keep the council informed from time to time of any opportunities that may offer themselves for the establishment of Workmen's Clubs and Institutes, or for the improvement of those already existing; also to acquaint them with the names of persons willing to take part in setting such institutions on foot.

Hoping that many of those who may read this letter will communicate with us—I remain, yours truly,

HODGSON PRATT (Vice-Chairman).

Working Men's Club and Institute Union,
150, Strand, London, W.C.
5th July, 1875.

Ragged School Union.

THE Monthly Meeting of the Managing Committee was held on July 9th, when the contributions for June were reported to be £199 4s. 10d., and the payments to be £371.

Quarterly grants amounting to £114 18s. 4d. were voted to twenty-one schools. Other payments, £170 9s. 4d.

The grant voted to Buross Street School, £30 3s. 4d. To Bell Alley School, £5. To Clare Market, £17, conditionally. To Price's Street School the grant of £15 increased to £20 per year. To Thrawl Street School, £4. To Marigold Place School, £2 2s. To Hertford School, £12. To Ernest Street School, £3.

Fresh applications for aid from Schools in Wentworth Street, George Yard, Price's Street, Holloway, Bacon Street, Menotti Street, Thrawl Street, Marigold Place, Hertford, and Ernest Street.

A legacy of £19 19s., bequeathed by the late Mr. Howard, was received, and notice given of a legacy by the late Rev. A. H. Bull.

Facts and Scraps.

LAMB AND FLAG, CLERKENWELL.—Every Sunday evening an open-air service is held by the teachers of this Ragged School on Clerkenwell Green. It serves as an antidote to the infidel discussions which are held throughout Sunday on this notorious spot. Very many are attracted by the singing, which is led by the female scholars.

CONSTANTINOPLE. — A Children's Service has just been established. It is held on Sunday afternoon. Many poor Turkish children are attracted by the hymns so popular in England and translated into their mother tongue.

DRINKING FOUNTAIN AND CATTLE TROUGH ASSOCIATION.—This is the only society which provides free supplies of water in the streets of London, and the relief which it affords, both to human beings and dumb animals, is incalculable. More than 300 troughs and fountains have been erected and are kept in repair and supplied with water, and more than 1,200 horses, besides oxen, sheep, and dogs, frequently drink at a single trough in one day, while at the fountains it is estimated that nearly 300,000 people drink daily in the summer, 8,000 having been known to drink at one fountain in a day.

SWIMMING BATHS FOR LONDON.—Attention is being widely drawn to the great advantages which the inhabitants of Leeds, Liverpool, and Manchester possess over Londoners in bathing accommodation. These towns possess swimming baths of large proportions, well supplied with water, either entirely free or else at a nominal charge, for the use of the inhabitants. Certainly these towns are setting a good example to the "Mother City" in this respect. Why cannot London, with its vast corporation, municipal and parochial powers, take a hint from Paris, and establish a few swimming baths on the Thames, such as exist on the Seine? asks the *Sanitary Record*. An undertaking of this kind, however, should be national in its aim, and should not be entrusted to the narrow limits of a private company, however disinterested the promoters of such a scheme may be, for the River Thames is public and not private property.

MOTHERS' PRAYER MEETINGS.—A goodly number of Christian mothers now meet every Wednesday afternoon at the Metropolitan Hall, Dublin, to pray specially for the conversion of their children; and through God's mercy in answer to prayer, similar meetings are being formed in other parts of Ireland. This is a movement in the right direction, and devoutly is it desired that these gatherings of praying mothers may become very general throughout the country. Let mothers, therefore, come together and pray, as mothers only can pray, for the souls of their children.—J. G.

THEATRE SERVICES.—During the past year the committee report that 320 services have been held, attended by about 241,100 persons, making in all, from the commencement of this effort, 2,448 services, attended by 2,837,900. All were

supplied with copies of the hymns sung on the occasion of their attendance. Through the liberality of the Religious Tract Society, in making most liberal grants of tracts, and also in allowing them to purchase at subscribers' prices, the committee have likewise been enabled to distribute, in all, 2,759,800 handbills, containing, with a notice of the services, a brief statement of some leading Christian truth.

PRIZE ESSAY ON SHOEBLACK BRIGADES.—Mr. W. E. Hubbard, jun., having offered to place at the disposal of the Refuge Union (see *ante*, p. 70) a prize of £5 for the best essay on the above subject, notices of the competition were sent to all engaged in the management of shoeblack brigades throughout the United Kingdom. Eighteen essays were received, and the prize was awarded to Mr. Scarfe, superintendent of the North-West London Brigade. This essay was read at a meeting of managers and others interested in shoeblacks, held at Mr. George Hanbury's house. A prize of £2 was afterwards offered by the Hon. T. Pelham, for the second best essay, which was awarded to Mr. Walter T. Browne, manager of the Boys' Refuge and Industrial Home, Strangeways, Manchester. The prize essay, to which are added extracts from some of the others, is published by the Reformatory and Refuge Union.

GARRISON LIBRARIES. — As so many of our elder scholars enlist into the regular army after entering the militia, we are glad to find that the War Office makes ample provision for the reading of good books. From a recent return we learn that at the close of 1874 the number of garrison libraries in the United Kingdom and in the colonies was 107, exclusive of 22 regimental libraries of the Royal Artillery, and 12 regimental libraries of the Royal Engineers. The aggregate number of volumes on the 31st of December was 218,876, as compared with 210,057 in the year 1871, being an increase of 8,819 volumes on the two years.

Notices of Meetings.

FIELD LANE, FARRINGDON ROAD.

Lord Shaftesbury recently presided at the 33rd annual meeting of the above schools in Little Saffron Hill, Farringdon Road, and was supported by the Right Hon. Cowper Temple, M.P., Sir Thomas Chambers, M.P., Sir Robert Carden, Revs. Dr. Edmond, Gordon Calthrop, Mr. George Cruikshank, Mr. John MacGregor, &c., &c.

The Secretary (Mr. Platt) then read an abstract of the annual report. It stated that in the Industrial Schools there were 56 boys engaged in tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, and wood-chopping, and 58 girls who are being for the most part trained for domestic service. All these children have been rescued from the most helpless destitution. The committee have recently taken a small house at Barnet for the reception of ten children requiring change of air. The Servants' Training Home continued to benefit large numbers, 89 young women having been admitted during

the year, and 360 garments having been given away. The Sunday Morning Service for children had an average attendance of from 70 to 100, and 800 had joined the Band of Hope since 1868. In the Penny Bank there were 706 depositors, the deposits during the year having amounted to £294 6s., and the withdrawals to £104 7s. 10d. In the Girls' Sewing Class, with which religious instruction was combined, there was an attendance of 200 girls every Tuesday evening. In the Male Refuge, the numbers admitted during the year were 764; and 5,639 lodgings, as well as 17,201 loaves, were provided. Situations were found for 102 of these inmates. In the Female Refuge the admissions were 496, and the lodgings provided 5,161, 283 garments having been given to the inmates. Amongst the other operations touched on in this report were the Ragged Church, for desolate and outcast humanity. Some 500 or 600 came to the Ragged Church every Lord's day morning. The majority of them were half-starved: they received a little bit of bread, although that was not what induced many to attend. It was also a source of great satisfaction that 800 children had joined the Band of Hope; and the Mothers' Meeting, whereby they were enabled to patch their children's clothes, was most useful.

Mr. George Moore (the treasurer) read the financial report, which showed that the total receipts for the year ending March, 1875, were £5,273 16s. 4d., and the total expenditure £4,770 3s., leaving a balance of £503 13s.

ILFORD, ESSEX.

The announcement that the Earl of Aberdeen would lay the foundation stones of ten cottages designed to form the nucleus of a home at Ilford for destitute girls, drew together on June 15th ult. a large and distinguished company bent on encouraging the hearts of Dr. and Mrs. Barnado, to whom the scheme owes its origin. The spot selected for this new enterprise is at the rear of Mossford Lodge, Barking Side, situate about two miles and a half from the railway-station at Ilford.

The land to be utilised for the purposes of the home is about nine acres in extent; and it is intended to build 30 cottages, together with an infirmary, laundry, and chapel, the latter to seat some 800 persons. Each cottage will hold, when complete, some 20 children and a matron, and all the blocks will form four sides of a parallelogram. On the ground-floor are dining-room, play-room, matron's room, larder, and store-rooms. Above these will be a matron's room and five dormitories. At present there are but 70 girls in the home, but when the new buildings are ready, accommodation will be provided for 600.

The stones were laid, prayer being offered at the outset by the Rev. T. G. Driffield, rector of Bow. Prayer was also offered up when the stone of the chapel was laid, and the singing of the Doxology and a few faint cheers brought this part of the ceremony to a close. At the luncheon which took place subsequently about 500 guests sat down, among whom were many influential persons.

The Earl of Aberdeen presided. Mr. Sankey sang the piece, "Rescue the perishing." Dr. Barnado addressed the meeting, and Mr. Henry Varley the children.

RAGGED SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

It is a trite saying that not what we eat, but what we digest, is the criterion of the physical good derived. So is it with the mind. It is not the quantity, but the *quality*, of the literature which attracts us which indicates whether the soul shall be built up healthily or the reverse. Now, if we measure the literature of the period by this rule, the results can only appal, especially when we think of the England of the future; for novels and serials which only appeal to the animal passions, or which foster morbid social views, are issued by the million week after week throughout the year.

Can we wonder, then, that our police courts teem with cases of mere children who have been led step by step into open crime, solely through reading books which are said to have been "vomited from the bottomless pit"? Tales of successful burglars, highwaymen, pirates, and similar lawless men, are not only written, but the heroes are dressed up in such fascinating colours that the youthful imagination is taken by storm. We cannot, then, be astonished, with the surroundings of the bulk of the poor, that they are eventually led to imitate characters they so much admire, for with a fallen nature it is far easier to copy the bad than to imitate the good.

On considering this question, and it is fast becoming a national one, we should omit a chief factor if we did not seek to discover the cause of this attractiveness of Satanic literature to the youthful mind. It appears to us that no slight element of the popularity of thieves' serials is found in the fact that they appeal to the imagination at a period when the romance natural to youth has not been curbed by the stern realities of life. This has made novels so popular with all classes that the present may be defined as a novel-reading age. Romanists and Ritualists have not been slow in availing themselves of this element in youth, and hundreds who would have shuddered at their Bible-denying dogmas, if presented in their native hideousness, have imbibed the mental poison before they have been aware. Our thanks, then, are due to such writers as Miss Charlesworth, Hesba Stretton, and A. L. O. E., who have done so much to train healthily the imaginative faculty of youth,

whilst at the same time they have supplied such pure spiritual aliment as is calculated to build up the soul for Jesus.

To meet the growing social evil referred to, several religious book societies have done a noble work. Most wisely, they have not striven to destroy the imaginative faculties, but rather to guide them into worthier channels. In so doing they have only imitated One whose marvellous insight into human nature even sceptics are compelled to confess; for it was characteristic of our Lord's teachings that "without a parable He spake nothing." Now any tale not written merely to amuse is only an expanded parable, for, as it has been beautifully defined, it is "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning."

Prominent among these caterers for youth is the Religious Tract Society, which for half a century has done very much to provide the young with books which are calculated to improve and elevate the general tone of society. Not the least of the merits of this Society is that it has always shown a great interest in the Ragged School movement. Thus, in 1872, in order "to replenish the old libraries of ragged schools and constitute new ones," it liberally voted a grant of £150 worth of books. Placed at the disposal of the Ragged School Union, the officials distributed them among sixty schools. In this way about 2,300 volumes were added to existing libraries, to the great delight of the managers and scholars.

Though on a smaller scale, the Book Society is also doing much to develop or foster healthy literary tastes. This Society has aided many Ragged Schools with free gifts or books at half price. The Sunday School Union also publishes books and serials for the young, and it has not been miserly in helping the affiliated Ragged Schools, sometimes by gifts of books at half price, and as often by free donations.

Nor can we omit a reference to the numerous libraries granted by the Pure Literature Society to Ragged Schools, at a moiety of the cost. By this plan several school libraries have been established which otherwise it would have been found difficult to have organised. We never heard of the application for a grant being refused in the past, nor is it likely that such aid will be refused in the future to any Ragged School. Will schools without a library put this *hint* to the test?

For many years the Ragged School Union has done its best by

private council, appeals in these pages, and distribution of books sent to the office, to encourage the connected Ragged Schools to form libraries. So successful has been the movement that seventy-five Ragged Schools have established libraries. The aggregate of books is 17,765, or an average of 253 volumes per library.

A few Mothers' Meetings have libraries attached to them. This has been found such a potent agency for good, that we hope the time is not far distant when any Ragged School Parents' Meeting will consider its machinery to be incomplete which has not its library for home reading.

The books comprising these libraries are pretty fairly divided betwixt the real and the imaginary. Works of travels or of natural history are as popular with elder boys as religious tales are with the younger scholars. One library, indeed, is so unique that it deserves separate notice—we refer to that attached to the Band of Hope of Mansfield Street Ragged School, Borough Road. Strictly confined to temperance works, the gift of a teetotal friend, it is one of our most pop ular libraries.

It may be intimated that every Ragged School library is utilised to promote regular attendance at the Sunday School and good behaviour when in the class. Thus the library becomes such a badge of merit that many a rough diamond has been polished in this way. For as it is an honour to be admitted to the library, it is regarded as a disgrace to be excluded for misconduct.

Among the many pleasing spectacles which greet a visitor to a well-conducted Ragged School on week nights, we know no scene more gratifying than that which greets the eye on library night. Favourite books, such as "Jessica's First Prayer," or Livingstone's travels, especially if recently added, are asked for ten deep, and not a little diplomacy is exercised to get them as soon as possible. The choice of books on the part of the scholars supplies no faint index as to their character; and this gives an experienced librarian an opportunity so to guide the choice that natural failings may be corrected, and good tastes still further developed. Of course this makes the office of librarian anything but a sinecure, but we believe in thus obeying the Saviour's command, "Feed my lambs," they find an ample reward. In fact, this office rarely goes "begging" in a well-conducted Ragged School.

It may be intimated that in more than one instance the school library has fostered such a taste for reading good books and

serials as to lead to a large sale of religious magazines. This is eminently the case with Ogle Mews Ragged School, Portland Road. The extent of its usefulness may be in some degree inferred from the fact that since its establishment the scholars have bought about 14,000 serials; all, we need scarcely say, healthy in tone, if not directly religious. A list of magazines, with their prices, is suspended in the schoolroom, and often we have seen the scholars scanning it most eagerly. Money thus spent may be regarded as so much saved from the Sunday sweetstuff shop or fruiterers.

Many pleasing facts detailed in the reports of local Ragged Schools show how potent an agency for good has been the school library. Parents have left off reading the Sunday newspaper to peruse the book which has so delighted their children. Scholars have read their books at home to relatives who were unable to read; and thus they have acted as so many little Evangelists. On doorsteps of dreary alleys we have not rarely seen groups of children, eager-eyed and breathless, listening with earnestness to some thrilling narrative read by a little ragged scholar, and thus giving glimpses of God's sunshine in the moral waste. In these ways the taste for pure reading has neutralised the literary poison now sown broadcast. But, best of all, facts innumerable prove that the Ragged School library has been used by the Holy Spirit as a means of winning many a young heart for Jesus.

CONNAUGHT SCRIPTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

In our February number we briefly noticed the work of the Dublin Ragged Schools, and showed how much they have done to socially elevate the degraded classes of that Rome-ridden city. We are glad to report that similar efforts are being conducted in other parts of the sister kingdom, and with equal success.

Prominent among the schools for the evangelisation of poor, benighted Romanist children are the Connaught Scriptural and Industrial Schools. They form a network of Ragged Schools, though with a different name, throughout one of the darkest provinces of Ireland. We need scarcely say that, with the Bible for a basis, they are doing a good work both for God and man.

These schools originated in 1847, when the famine opened a wide

field for missionary labour in the destitute districts of Ireland. They are supported by voluntary contributions from Ladies' Associations, Sabbath Schools, Congregations and Members of the different Evangelical Churches in Great Britain and Ireland.

Opposed by the priests, they are popular with the people. They are 45 in number, with 49 teachers.

The need of such an instrumentality is still very great. The population of Connaught at the census in 1871 was 845,993. A large majority of these could not read. The proportion of Romanists to Protestants is eighteen to one.

The schools are under the constant and immediate oversight of the missionaries of the district, and are greatly helpful to the work of the missionary, scripture-reader, and colporteur.

An Orphanage and Refuge Home is established in Ballina, County Mayo, for destitute female children, in connection with the schools, and young persons fleeing from persecution. From twenty to thirty young persons are sheltered in it until they are fit for service at home, or for emigration to the colonies.

Twenty-eight years have elapsed since their formation. Though the enthusiasm with which they were at first hailed and the exciting events connected with their early history have passed away, they continue quietly and steadily to diffuse the blessings of Scriptural education, and to spread the light of truth in regions where ignorance and error largely prevail. Their object is not to proselytise to a party, or to increase a sect, but to win souls for Christ. By the Bible and a good secular education they are seeking to train the rising generation to whom they have access for a holy and useful life here, and for a holy and useful life hereafter. They are leavening the mind of the community with right ideas and principles, and are thus "preparing the way of the Lord." Some 30,000 young persons during the quarter of a century of their history have learned of Jesus and read His Word.

During the past year 45 schools have been in operation, with 49 teachers, attended by 1,560 scholars. Of these 392 are Presbyterians, 542 belong to other Protestant denominations, and 626 are children of Roman Catholic parents. The average annual cost of these agencies is below £1,500.

As has been the case from the outset, several teachers report the furious opposition of the Roman hierarchy and priesthood. Altar denunciations, the terrific power of the confessional, and physical force, are often trying to faith and patience. But when anxious inquirers come to ask after the way of the Lord more perfectly, and tidings come across the sea from refugees who have fled from persecu-

tion at home, and are now in the communion of Protestant churches when the servant-girl, the artisan, the merchant, and even the minister and professor in a college, can be pointed to as being in former days pupils in our humble schools; when we hear the dying testimony of happy death-beds, and know of not a few who are still witnessing a good confession, we thank God and take courage, and set ourselves anew to bear the burden and heat of the day.

Apart from direct spiritual good done to souls, and the gathering of many into the fold of Christ's Church, there are indirect benefits resulting which ought not to be overlooked.

At the present time Irishmen are manifesting a singular spirit of inquiry and independent thought in social, if not in spiritual, matters. The events of the past four years on the continent of Europe, and the temporal condition of the Papacy, have had an effect first to astound, and then to lead to the inquiry—How can these things be? Accordingly, there is an increasing demand for religious literature and copies of the Scripture, and a greater willingness is manifested to listen to a plain and simple exposition of Protestant views on these and corresponding topics.

These schools, it is satisfactory to state, were the means of introducing the sewed muslin manufacture, which is now a profitable branch of industry in several counties. This has afforded a field for the productive use of capital, and thus has given work to hundreds, and so added to the recent marked increase in the wealth of Ireland.

Two cases will show that our fellow-workers in Connaught have not laboured in vain, so far as respects the higher interests of their scholars.

A former pupil of Dromore West School, once a poor Roman Catholic lad, suffering too at that time from bodily weakness, is now a Protestant clergyman in the United States, and a professor in a college, labouring successfully in the Lord's vineyard, and zealous for the spread of the Gospel. He has written home a few weeks ago to his parents, who still survive, beseeching them to leave the Church of Rome, and that idolatrous system which has so long kept them in darkness. He speaks with gratitude of the Sabbath School lessons in the Sabbath School, and of his early reading of the Scriptures, which, under God's blessing, has "made him wise unto salvation." The seed thus sown years ago is now bearing fruit in a distant land.

Maggie M—— was both a Day and Sabbath scholar of Lisglennon School. She had formerly been rather giddy and thoughtless, but for some months before her death she seemed to take a new interest in her lessons, both at the Day School and Sabbath Class. She was a bright and intelligent girl of about thirteen years of age, when she

was suddenly cut off by diphtheria. Death, however, to her had lost its terrors. The day before she died her aunt said to her, "Maggie dear, I fear you will not be long here." She replied, quite composedly, "No, auntie; earth is not our resting-place, but heaven is our home." She said more than once that she was trusting in Jesus, and was evidently neither taken by surprise nor alarmed at the near prospect of death. She asked her aunt to read to her the 14th chapter of John's Gospel; told her not to grieve for her, adding that she and all the rest must come after her to heaven. A few hours afterwards she peacefully departed to join that happy band of little ones, of whom she had often sung in days of health, who stand around the throne, "singing Glory, glory, glory."

Have we not here fresh proofs of the importance of continuing, prayerfully and earnestly, to sow the seeds of Divine truth in the minds of the young?

With social and spiritual fruits like these—and they are but *gleanings* of the rich harvest—we may well wish God-speed to these and similar Irish Mission Schools. For if Ireland is ever to regain her ancient well-earned title, the "Isle of Saints," it must be through its sons being leavened with that true Gospel which has nothing in its creed but Christ. Thanks to the Irish Ragged and Mission Schools we believe that this great event is much nearer than the votaries of Rome seem to imagine. In the meantime let us help on this great climax of Christian effort by our earnest prayers.

A RAGGED SCHOOL BLIND SCRIPTURE READER.

Though every Ragged School was founded with one object in view—namely, to socialise and to save our social outcasts—yet most prominent institutions have some *unique* agency which marks it out from other Ragged Schools. This diversity makes each Ragged School, so to speak, a world in itself, and renders it a potent instrument for good in the district where it is planted.

Some of these special agencies, mostly of a social character, have been described in these pages; but one most important, both in aim and results, has not been referred to. We allude to the Blind Scripture Reader and Seller employed by the friends of One Tun Ragged School, Perkins Rents, Westminster, under the vigilant superintendence of Mrs. Barker Harrison. For the past eight years this Blind Scripture Reader has gone forth to sow the Divine seed of the Word by the simple reading of the Scriptures. Here may be noticed the difference in his work from that of the numerous "poor blind" who sit,

or wander slowly along, asking "an alms." This Reader pitches his reading-stand in a convenient place—perhaps in nearly a hundred localities during the week—opens the Bible, which is printed in Moon's raised type, and commences to read, in a distinct, audible voice. Again, he sells as well as reads the Bible.

It is interesting to watch the effect. For a little while, perhaps, he is completely alone: surely it is useless to remain. But perhaps some one at a window, unseen, is receiving comfort from the passage read. And now one or two pass the Reader, but turn slowly back, as if ashamed of being seen listening. Children, who are always ready to hear *and see* a blind man read, hush their merry voices, as, perchance, they hear the loving words, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." Not unfrequently a stalwart soldier, whose heart has been already touched by Divine grace, heartily encourages the Reader in his work; and thus a crowd is gathered.

Although the Reader must necessarily pass through the same streets frequently, the desire to possess the Word, that they may read for themselves, does not diminish, as *above a thousand portions were purchased* last year by the bystanders.

A few cases from his diary will show that this Blind Reader has been the means of leading the morally "blind by a way they knew not." A woman in the New Cut, who two or three years since stated how greatly the reading had been blessed to her, and was about to become a communicant, met the Reader, and said she had kept in the good way ever since, and seemed full of humble, trusting faith, and was not ashamed to confess her Saviour before the little assembly. At another time an old man, who said he had often listened to the Reader, asked him to read the first chapter of Proverbs, and then said, "Ah! those words, 'I will mock at their calamity.' I tremble for my home; I have five children grown up, earning good money, all going wrong, although I am old, and afflicted with asthma." Asking him why he came out such a cold, foggy night, he said, "Through a drunken woman! My wife is now lying drunk on the floor, my home is in a dreadful state, and I am suffering, as you can hear, but I would rather be by you, hearing the Blessed Book, than in my miserable home. The last heavy fog I could hardly get my breath, yet my wife went out and got drunk. Oh, if I had been taught right in early life I should not be in such deep trouble; but the book says, 'I will laugh at their calamity!'"

A poor man in consumption, bending his steps towards the Brompton Hospital, seeing the Reader, crossed over, and said he was glad to meet him, because he could give him some text to rest

on during his visit to the hospital. The Reader turned over his book, and put his fingers on the words, "He shall gather the wheat into His garner." "That will do," said he, "not a word more; I thank God for that precious word;" and away he went, as if some heavy load was lifted off his heart. A little *blind* girl of seven was brought one day by her brother to hear the *blind* man read. She appeared very serious and thoughtful beyond her years, and was delighted with one of the Gospels her brother bought for her.

The Reader occasionally visits the market people in Drury Lane and Billingsgate, and is always cheered by his welcome, and the Scriptures are eagerly purchased. After reading and explaining John iv. 24, a man, who spoke with a strong Irish accent, said, "That is sound, there is no error in that; he isn't like other Protestants; this man is worth hearing, every word he says is true!" Another seemed to have been led by the Scriptures to see his lost state by nature, and the plan of salvation, when a bystander remarked, "You have said many fine things, but some are not true." The Reader replied that he merely read the Gospel, and drew attention to the Saviour's own words, He offered life to all. The man said, "No, He never did; can you quote a passage?" "Scores," said the Reader, which he did, and asked the caviller in return to give a single passage where the soul is forbidden to come to Christ, or, if he came, he would be cast out. After considerable hesitation, he said "he knew there was such a passage, but he could not remember where!"

One evening the Reader for some time could not account for the crowd of persons, male and female, which passed continuously, shouting, singing, and even dancing, and many intoxicated. At length he was informed that the hop-picking season was over, and many of the "pickers" had returned with a few shillings, which they were squandering in this way. However, he was listened to with wonderful attention whilst he read from the Book of Ezekiel the "vision of dry bones." With such surroundings one seems to hear the solemn question, "Can these bones live?" and can but humbly answer, "Lord, thou knowest!"

It is the Reader's sorrowful experience that intemperance is much on the increase. Several times he has suddenly found himself in the midst of a fighting mob; women striking each other with lumps of coal in a stocking till they were covered with blood; men falling with fearful violence on the pavement, or being dragged struggling to the station by the police, were events sufficiently startling and bewildering to a blind man. But there were always some friendly bystanders ready to protect and shield him, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

The Reader notes in one part of his journal: "During this month I have come in contact with much infidelity; one of these so-called free-thinkers said, 'You say infidels cannot die happy; but have you read, "Thoughts of the Sick Room," and "Death of Austin Holyoake"?' 'Yes, I have heard it read.' 'What do you think of it; could your Christians die happier?' 'Yes,' I replied; 'he was very calm and self-possessed in that solemn hour, but he lacked one essential.' 'What was that?' 'Hope! The Christian hath hope in his death.' A murmur of approval greeted this reply."

It is right to say that the cost of this mission—about £60 per annum—does not come out of the school funds, but is defrayed by separate contributions.

OUR PENNY BANKS.

In connection with the Ragged School Union there are 76 Penny Banks. Two of these—Harrow Street, Mint, and Robert Street, New-Cut—enroll about 2,000 depositors every year. They are chiefly costermongers and fish-hawkers. Many of them when they are "flush" of money put a pound in one week and take it out the next, in order to buy stock when their takings have been less favourable. The aggregate number of depositors in our Penny Banks last year was no less than 24,720. The total amount deposited during 1874 was £13,140 10s. 10d.

They are all very popular in their respective districts, and do much to teach habits of thrift to many who, from their unthrifty conduct, are obliged to live from "hand to mouth." They also preach silently but practically that true Christians, like their Divine Master, do not forget that men have bodies as well as souls, and thus many who were once callous to all religious teachings have been led to attend the connected Ragged Church or Mission Service. Probably, if there were more of that practical Christianity which teaches more by deeds than by words, there would be less of that indifference to religion which, rather than avowed infidelity, marks the poorer classes.

A lady who recently visited one of our Penny Banks in the west of London, supplies the following photograph of the scene witnessed to a serial. Any visitor can see a similar spectacle on Monday evening from 6 till 9, the hours our Penny Banks are open:—

"A strange medley of persons is to be seen here for two hours every Monday evening. First, perhaps, you will see a number of working men on their way home, with baskets of tools suspended from their shoulders, putting by small sums. Then, perhaps, comes

in a barrow-woman, so hurried that she has hardly time to count her farthings and small coin, as she has run in to put these by while a friend has promised to look after her barrow. Then comes a tidy working man's wife, followed by her little children, each anxious to be first in giving in his bank-book.

And then will come a rush of rude, noisy boys, the roughest in the neighbourhood. These came in first, attracted by the gaslight, and to warm their hands at the fire, or to have a little fun in annoying the more respectable depositors, but a kind word or a picture tract usually quiets them for a time, and then even some of them are pretty sure to come up to the table with their 'Please, I'll have a book,' and thus some pence are saved which would otherwise have gone in pitch and toss. Then in comes a respectable mechanic, who puts by the weekly rent of his lodgers, that it may be kept safe against his own quarter-day.

The Post-office banks will receive no sum less than a shilling; but here costermongers bring their farthings and their threepenny-bits, and children bring their pence.

One of these rough boys who swept a crossing in the neighbourhood first left a penny, the next week he brought sevenpence, and he continued saving little by little till he had enough to buy a coarse suit. Then he left his crossing and obtained work, and he has gone on steadily for four years, till now he gives us three or four shillings a week to put by for him. A poor man saved in small sums enough to purchase a barrow, and is now a flourishing costermonger. A girl, maid of all work, saved enough to pay her own passage out to America, where she has friends. Every week gives proofs of similar benefit effected.

'But,' as a friend of mine said to me, 'this may be all true, but it is all secular. What good does it do to their souls?' To which my reply was, 'The blessings of salvation have been received in many homes which would never have been reached by us but by the Penny Bank.' For it is especially to be observed that the depositors seem always to apply at the bank when trials overtake them, and invariably to look to the bank for more than temporal help. It is not only a work of pounds, shillings, and pence, for all cases of sickness and distress are visited, and the simple Gospel has thus been brought home to many a heart."

Facts like these, and they might be multiplied did space permit, show what a mighty social lever is the Ragged School Penny Bank.

In Memoriam.

LADY FRANKLIN.
MR. EDWARD JAMES TABRUM.
MR. GEORGE MILLER.
MR. EDWARD E. HARDWICK.
MR. EDWIN HOUGH.

ALREADY this year these pages have chronicled the deaths of eight persons who actively supported the Ragged School movement. Some died young, others had exceeded the allotted seventy years of man; but whether they were young or hoary, not one was called home before he had finished his Master's work here. And seeing that it is written that His "servants shall *serve* Him in the New Jerusalem," we may infer their work for Jesus has not ended, but that they have only been called to a higher service in a place where there is no weariness and no mistakes.

We have now to record the deaths of five more friends of the poor who in different ways promoted the Ragged School movement—all of whom departed this life in the last four or five weeks.

LADY FRANKLIN,

the widow of the renowned Arctic explorer, died on Sunday evening, July 18th, at her house in Phillimore Gardens., in her 81st year. She was the second daughter of John Griffin and his wife Mary, *née* Guillemard, whose family took refuge in England after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Her father was by habit a traveller, and this passion for travel descended to the daughter, who accompanied him in his yearly journeys through England and the Continent. In November, 1828, she married Captain (afterwards Sir John) Franklin, and between that date and 1844 she travelled with him in the East, in Van Diemen's Land, to which her husband was appointed governor, and in New Zealand, and was the first lady who travelled overland from Melbourne to Sydney. A few months after their return Sir John was offered the command of the expedition sent to discover the North-west Passage, and with her Majesty's ships *Erebus* and *Terror* he left England for the last time on the 18th of May, 1845. The history of the various expeditions sent out to determine the fate of Sir John Franklin is well known. Lady Franklin was the first, and, with one exception, the only woman upon whom the gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society was conferred. Subsequently to 1858 Lady Franklin visited, amongst other places, South America, Vancouver Island, the Sandwich Islands, California, Japan, China,

Calcutta, and Egypt. In her 80th year she travelled from San Francisco to New York, and visited Chicago and many other places.

Like her distinguished husband Lady Franklin was marked by her unostentatious charity and her simple faith in Christ. For the past twenty-eight years she was an annual subscriber to the Ragged School Union; and by gifts of clothing to local schools, and in other ways, showed much interest in our mission.

MR. EDWARD JAMES TABRUM

was called home on July 17th, at the comparatively early age of thirty-seven. In February last he was laid aside by fever, and, though at first hopes were formed that the attack would not be fatal, yet the sequel proved that his frame had been so sapped by over-work that he never really rallied from a disease which brought on rapid consumption.

Mr. Tabrum, who was a senior clerk in the Office of Rolls, devoted all his leisure—his holidays not excepted—for the past twenty years to works of Christian usefulness. For some years he was an earnest and successful teacher at the Ragged School, Milton's Yard, Islington. From this, his "first love," he never receded, and thus he not only often addressed the scholars of the local Ragged Schools, but was ever ready to advocate their interests on the public platform. In addition to this Mr. Tabrum organised and became the honorary secretary of the "Islington and North London Shoeblack Brigade." This society, which was organised in 1857, owed much of its success to his untiring energies. Last year it employed forty boys, who earned £1,631 6s. 6d. It is self-supporting.

But his most prominent work—that in which his bodily and mental strength were concentrated—was the Islington Youths' Institute, of which he was the hon. secretary. Night after night he was found at his post directing the studies of about 400 lads, aged from thirteen to nineteen. In addition he conducted a Bible Class on Saturday evenings for the members, of whom about 170 often attended; many of these not only owed their rise in life, but their conversion, to this class. The fact we gleaned from him in conversation—that he devoted seven hours to the preparation of the weekly lesson—showed an amount of conscientious work which cannot be too highly commended, and which powerfully condemns those Sunday School teachers who think "anything will do" for their classes.

But as if the above were not enough work for even an *un*-ordinary man, however great his power of work, he joined the London School Board at its first appointment. Through the canvas, of "his boys," as he always delighted to call them, he polled a larger number than any male

candidate at the election of 1870. In undertaking this additional duty we think that he made a great mistake; at all events, the united works taxed his energies so much that when fever set in he had not sufficient strength left to resist its ravages. Mr. Tabrum has thus become another martyr to that over-work which is one of the most fatal blunders of the mental workers of this restless age.

With mental activity above the average and a good education, we ascribe no small part of Mr. Tabrum's success in all he undertook to his steady conscientious labour. Of quick temperament and full of animal spirits, yet he could plod like the veriest dullard when it was needed to thoroughness. It was this which gave him that mastery of details which astonished all with whom he came in contact who did not know his methodical habits of study. It was in this way—by earnestness of purpose and persistency in labour—that he showed outwardly his inward loyalty to Jesus. And as such he is a model for all who are seeking so to lead youths that they may have a "right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Mr. George Miller.

The name of another veteran has now to be added to the lengthening roll of those who rest from their labours and whose works follow them. Mr. George Miller was for many years the Superintendent and Treasurer of the Hinde's Mews Ragged Schools, one of the first at work for the benefit of the neglected poor in the west of London, afterwards removed to Davies' Mews, but now in Gray's Yard, Oxford Street. The amiable temper and good sense of our late friend secured to the school a faithful staff of workers, and his generous kindness to the poor strongly attracted to the school the waifs and strays of juvenile humanity that abounded in the locality. He carried on a large respectable business in the locality, employed many hands, which, with his schools and mission enterprises, made him not only well known but very popular, for he was playful, full of fun, and could joke with the little ones, upon whom he seemed always to look with a fatherly affection. His bearing to his co-workers, whether in shop or school, was always respectful, and although he was a man of strongly marked individuality, yet in pressing home his views on others he did it with such considerateness and urbanity that he always made a favourable impression even when he did not succeed in gaining an opponent. In this way he was a most valued, unwearied, and successful worker in the temperance cause. He adopted the principles of total abstinence in 1838, and strongly urged its claims as an agency well fitted to promote the social, moral, and religious elevation of the people. He formed one of the largest Bands of Hope in his

own school, and was one of the founders of the Fitzroy Teetotal Association, to which he acted as the treasurer to the day of his death. He was educated at his parish school in Scotland, and when old enough he was apprenticed to a baker. He became the Managing Director of the New Wheaten Bread Company, which he worked very successfully. He removed to London, where, after working for others for ten years, he entered business on his own account. As a master he adopted the principles he advocated when a journeyman, and did what he could to preserve the health of his men, and was the advocate of journeymen bakers for revising the hours of labour. As a citizen he was called upon to take his share of public duty, which he cheerfully discharged, one of the most painful of which was his appointment of foreman of the jury before whom Palmer was tried for the strychnine murder. Impaired health caused Mr. Miller to retire from business ten years since to his native place, Kinross, where he has spent the last few years in lending a helping hand in promoting the material, moral, and religious advancement of the people among whom he lived. Here his sympathies were drawn out by the old as well as by the young. It was his habit to invite the old women of the town each winter to a good tea, and afterwards to give them an excellent entertainment, exchanging with them reminiscences of bygone days, and sending each home with a substantial present. It is only right to add that his private beneficence was as varied and generous as his public benefactions. Among his most recent appointments for the public service was that of a member of the School Board of Kinross parish. He died on July 28th last, after a very brief illness, and was interred in the old churchyard of Kinross, on the banks of Loch Leven. The Band of Hope that he reorganised in 1868, and has since so well flourished, followed his remains to their last resting-place. "Our Friend sleepeth," Matt. ix. 14. And

> Could you behold him in that better land,
> Arrayed in white, with golden harp and crown,
> With cherubim and angels see him stand
> For ever blest, you could not wish him down.

Mr. Edward E. Hardwick

was the valued Superintendent of the Evening Schools in Hope Street, Spitalfields, a work for which he was peculiarly fitted, in which he was very successful, and in which his happiness seemed much centred in the faithful discharge of its duties. Only a day or two before fell disease commenced its ravages he was gambolling with his scholars at South-end in spending "a day in the country." At the beginning of middle life, in the prime of his powers, he was stricken with fever, and at

the early age of thirty-eight was gathered to the grave, surrounded by a vast concourse of his scholars, fellow-teachers, and friends, also by his widow and two children. Mr. Hardwick was of a very affectionate disposition, fervent and constant in his friendship, and unusually simple-hearted and single-minded. He had a frank, genial, and child-like purity of character. He impressed his friends with his earnest faith in God, whom he loved to serve, and an implicit trust in the finished work of Christ as his Redeemer. His services in religious work were unobtrusive and yet effective. Apparently he had a very modest opinion of the value of his own work, but all who knew him, and the way the Hope Street School was conducted, had no mean idea of his fitness for the work and of his ability to fill usefully the post he occupied. The rapidity with which disease did its worst, and the suddenness with which our friend was removed, prevented a dying testimony from his lips; but what is better was the testimony of life, of service, and of those who knew him best, that he died in Christ and now rests from his labours.

He was interred at Abney Park Cemetery on August 12th; the service at the grave was conducted by the Rev. W. Tyler, who, on the following Sunday evening, preached a funeral sermon in Trinity Congregational Church, Mile End New Town. Several representatives were present at the funeral, and among them Mr. Gent from the Parent Society.

The poor man was there, who felt that his friend
  In affliction could visit no more;
The rich man was there, lamenting the end
Of one he esteemed as a brother and friend,
  Whose loss he must ever deplore.

His loved wife was there in sorrow to mourn—
  Who attended his illness with worth;
She mourned that her husband so soon should be torn
Down to the dark tomb, to leave her forlorn,
  And to mix with the dust of the earth.

But, O, there's a charm nought on earth can destroy,
  Though the form lies entombed in the sod,
That will oft cause the thought to fill us with joy,
And oft to the mourner each comfort employ—
  'Tis the thought that he dwells with his God.

MR. EDWIN HOUGH

filled a quieter sphere of Christian usefulness than our other friends, but he was equally a firm advocate of Ragged Schools. Of the riper age of about sixty, he, too, was called home, but in less than a week, by typhus.

For about a quarter of a century Mr. Hough was the sub-editor of the *Record*, a religious journal which has always stood by Ragged Schools amid "good report and evil report." Wielding the pen of a ready writer, it was ever at the service of Ragged Schools and kindred movements. Hence, we are indebted to him for many a telling sketch of our operations, more especially when any new scheme for socialising and saving the wild tribes of London was inaugurated. Occasionally, too, Mr. Hough took part in Ragged School Special Services and Tea Meetings, though he always modestly omitted his own name from the list of speakers, including it, as he did, in the "&c., &c." These addresses were invariably brief, but always full of matter and to the point, and delivered as they were with inimitable tenderness they were as the "Balm of Gilead" to many a stricken conscience or weary heart.

As Mr. Hough was always ready to aid his brother journalists in their responsible labours he was very popular with his fellow-workers. Remarkably conciliatory and courteous, as well to the poor as to the rich, he was a true type of the true Christian gentleman—a race we are sorry to say that cynics affirm to be nearly extinct in this age of "veneer."

From these inadequate sketches of our five departed friends our readers may glean what a legacy as workers for Jesus they have left to those still privileged to labour in the Lord's vineyard. Like Nehemiah's helpers, they repaired that part of the wall which was "against their own houses;" nay, more, they won, we doubt not, that encomium of the Holy Spirit which was given to Baruch (Nehem. iii. 29), "he *earnestly* repaired" his part of the wall of the Holy City. May this be our epitaph when our life-work is over, for it will assuredly be accorded to all who labour, not for human applause, but steadily and conscientiously for the glory of the Master.

Let us, then, in our several spheres as Ragged School workers, imitate our departed brothers, and this we shall do if we accept the following lines of Dr. Bonar as the law of our lives:—

Waste not thy being: back to Him
  Who freely gave it, freely give;
Else is that being but a dream,
  'Tis but to *be*, and not to *live*.

Fill up each hour with what will last:
  Buy up the moments as they go:
The life above, when this is past,
  Is the ripe fruit of life below.

Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure:
  Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
  And find a harvest-home of light.

EXCURSIONS.

THE *Children's Holiday*, as conducted under the auspices of the Committee of the Parent Society by their officers, took place on July 23rd. The object was to give a "day in the country," with refreshments, fruit, and toys, to the scholars in Day Schools that would not, in all probability, otherwise have such a treat. Lord Shaftesbury kindly entered into the spirit of the object, and, in addition to his own contribution for the purpose, wrote the following note, which, on being used on a very limited scale, and at a very small cost, was responded to, and the fund was raised to pay all the expenses incurred in taking out 2000 children and a sufficient staff of teachers and friends needful to have a proper oversight of them. His lordship in his note wrote:—

> "The time for the annual treat to the Ragged School children being at hand, I venture once more to request your aid on that behalf.
>
> "As I have said before, so now I say again, that over and above the pleasure it gives to the poor little things, it is one of the most effective modes we have for maintaining discipline among them."

The 2000 children with their teachers came from thirteen Schools, mostly in the east of London. These were conveyed from their school-rooms to Bushey Park by thirty-eight vans, and those situated near the Waterloo Station were taken by train by the London and South-Western Railway. The whole passed off without a mishap and with much of real pleasure. The weather, compared with what had been, was favourable. It was known that from the previous rain for several days the ground must be wholly unfit to sit upon, though dry enough for other uses. This difficulty was well met by taking boards in each van and placing them on the ground, on which the children could sit for meals, &c., without in any way suffering from the damp earth.

We have met with much kind sympathy and aid in endeavouring to give a long day of real enjoyment to a large number of very poor children. Our friends at Red Hill kindly sent £6 11s. 3d. collected for the purpose from the children there.

The following letter we gladly insert, as it shows how to cultivate kind and generous feelings in a better class of children, surrounded with many comforts, towards those whose lot in life has but little of comfort and much of suffering. The pleasure, too, of alleviating that suffering and adding a little to that modicum of comfort to less favoured brothers and sisters must have been greatly enhanced by the kind and suitable means adopted. The following is from the friend who forwarded the contribution:—

POOR CHILDREN'S TREATS.

SIR,—For three years now we have asked our children for a thank-offering after their summer treat; the first year we got £3 2s. 6d., the second £2 12s. 6d., which was sent to Ragged Schools in London, and

enabled forty or fifty children each year to have their outing. These collections were made shortly *after* the treat, but this year it was more convenient to have it before, and last Sunday we had 504 coins put into the plates after our usual monthly children's service in the afternoon, which amounted to £6 11s., and is to be sent to the Ragged School Union towards taking some 2000 children into the country. Our schools muster about 500, and there were about 800 present at the service, including parents and others. Will not other country schools try the same plan? A penny from each child or family even would go a long way towards providing for the raggedness in London, and the children like giving for such an object, and it does them good to think of others' wants. Could not other Committees take charge of such offerings, and distribute them in the most urgent cases? A good many country treats will be over by this time, but there will be many in London still waiting, hoping, and longing for the means to have their "day in the country."

I am, Sir,

EDWARD F. GEDGE.

St. Matthew's Schools, Red Hill.

Teachers' Excursion.—For some years past the Committee of the Ragged School Union has given an invitation to the masters, mistresses, and their assistants in Ragged Schools, to spend a day in the country. This year it was given for July 17th to Hampton Court Palace and gardens. About 250 were invited, most of whom accepted the invitation, but the unfortunate weather was such that not many more than a third of the number were present. It was found to be impracticable to postpone the entertainment. The Palace, however, afforded ample shelter with much to instruct and to please. Notwithstanding the weather the occasion was very enjoyable and the company much enlivened by singing, greatly helped by an instrument that had thoughtfully been taken to the marquee.

Hints for Teachers.

CONVERSION OF SCHOLARS.

THERE can be no subject of graver moment to Ragged School teachers than the conversion of our scholars; and, if there is anything that can aid in bringing about this happy result, we ought eagerly to seek it out, and rest not until we possess it.

There are many desirable and necessary adjuncts to Sunday-school labour. Discipline and order must be earnestly maintained, without which little permanent good will be realised. Our teaching power may be excellent, our organisation without reproach, our average attendances may be high, and where no reward, save an approving conscience, is offered, we may thereby gauge the interest of the teachers and officers in the school.

Yet, with all this, we may painfully lack what we profess to desire above everything,—the conversion

of the children. We cannot be too jealous concerning the matters just named; but we ought sedulously to guard the spirit that would make them anything except the *channels* of the Water of Life. In these days we are too apt, in many instances, to live upon the good name of our schools, and are satisfied with the approval and praise of the world, which, after all, looks upon us as merely a great educational agency. We ought, indeed, to merit all its praise; but we must seek higher ground before we can satisfy the claims of our work. We must bring every talent to our work, and gather from every source help to correct views of Biblical truth. If, however, we rest here, we woefully miss the gaol, and must continue to mourn over those who leave us without God and without hope in the world.

We cannot hope to accomplish very much if we content ourselves by giving instruction and counsel to our classes in the aggregate. We must know every scholar personally; finding out their vulnerable parts; and, "in season, out of season," press upon them our attention and love, in order to secure their hearts for Jesus. We may not satisfy ourselves with even the *faithful* discharge of our duty on the Lord's day in our classes; so doing, I believe, we are not conscious of our whole duty. These may sound hard words, and will appear to exclude from this sphere of labour some ardent brother or sister whose leisure time is very scarce. They are not so, however, as a moment's consideration would suffice to show. I admit that, at the outset, this work will be laborious; but it will never exceed the opportunities of a large majority of our staff; whilst a few weeks would bring the work into manageable form, and by that time, I venture to say, labour will be rest, and pain be sweet.

My experience leads me to give paramount importance to private intercourse with my scholars; it secures me a gradual ascendency over the scholar's heart; we are no longer separated, but account each other friends. I remember with gratitude the earnest solicitude of my old teacher, and have long been satisfied that no other course can open so complete and desirable a means of speaking the truth as it is in Jesus. Instead of undervaluing the preparation of Sabbath-lessons, this private intercourse will present an unfailing incitement to diligence in the culture of the mind. The teacher who seeks his scholars during the week, for their benefit, cannot neglect this work of preparation; other teachers may, but he can never afford to go through his lessons in any haphazard manner.

In the school with which I am connected, we have select religious classes for boys and girls, and I can speak to the great benefit they have conferred upon many. When the tear starts to the eye of a boy or girl during the school-lesson, we ought to nourish the feeling that gave it birth; and one of the means to this end is to ask the children to meet in these classes. Our success is mainly attributable to a few teachers, who labour as I have endeavoured to point out; and I know they are resolved to pursue their work with renewed diligence, having found in it both blessing and reward.

G. R.

Ragged School Union.

THE Monthly Meetings of the Committee were held on August 9th and 13th. The contributions during July were reported to have amounted to £590 17s. 4d., of which £288 6s. 1d. were legacies bequeathed by the late Mrs. Howard and the Rev. A. H. Bull. The payments were £341 19s. 8d.

Grants in aid of teachers' salaries for the quarter ordered for payment amounted to £57, and other payments to £211 17s. 9d.

The payment of £15 to Tottenham Square was made; also of £5 to the school in Bell Alley, and of £2 10s. for the cleaning of the school building in Snowsfields, and £7 10s. towards the rent of the same. A grant was voted towards cost of employing doorkeeper, &c., for Homerton School.

Applications from Buross Place, Bacon Street, Charles Street, Holloway, and Lower Park Road were further considered.

Fresh applications for assistance were received from Poplar, York Mews, Lambeth, Shadwell, and Nichol Street.

Arrangements to be made for holding conferences for the extension of Night Schools, the same to be held at 1, Exeter Hall, on the evenings of September 8th and 22nd, also October 6th and 20th. It was decided to secure the services of a gentleman to aid the present officers in the special work of extending the Night Schools of London.

Notice was received of a legacy bequeathed to the Society by the late Mrs. McAll.

Facts and Scraps.

GOLDEN LANE, ST. LUKE'S.—After the close of the Sunday night school an open-air service is held by the managers of this school. The "Earl's barrow" is used to convey the harmonium to the spot selected, which abuts on the so-called Hall of Science, where Charles Bradlaugh sows his pernicious doctrines.

PERKINS RENTS, WESTMINSTER.—In connection with this Ragged School there is a Youths' Institute, for lads between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. It is open every evening from 6.30 to 9.45. There are educational, Bible, and singing classes. Geometry and freehand drawing are taught.

BAD DWELLINGS.—Recently Dr. Hardwicke, the coroner for Middlesex, held an inquest at the Clerkenwell Tavern, Exmouth Street, Clerkenwell, upon the body of John Escott, aged seven, who was found

dead. In consequence of the bad state of the drains, &c., Mrs. E. and her children, and a man with whom she was living, slept in a room 15ft. long, 8ft. wide, and 7ft. high. On Thursday evening they all went to bed, leaving the windows open. On the following morning, at half-past seven, the deceased was found to be dead. Till a short time ago there was no water-butt, and if water was wanted it had to be caught in tubs when it came in from the pipes. Dr. Thurland, the medical gentleman who was called in, stated that, in his opinion, the house was not fit for habitation. The jury returned a verdict that the deceased died from suffocation, and drew up a resolution calling the attention of the vestry to the state of the house.

FLOWER MISSION.—At the conference at Mildmay Park this Mission was referred to. It was stated that, by the permission of Mrs. Pennefather and Miss Macpherson, central depôts were opened on March 30, at the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, and the the Home of Industry, Commercial Street, Spitalfields. Every week the ladies meet to receive the boxes and arrange the flowers in the text bouquet holders, then taking them to various hospitals, workhouses, &c., they sang hymns and spoke to the inmates. The average number of bouquets sent out weekly by the Mission has been between three and four thousand.

FACTORY COMMISSION.—The sittings of the Factory and Workshops Commission have been resumed at Manchester. Among the witnesses was Dr. Fergusson, certifying surgeon of Bolton, who gave his views as to the physical degeneracy of factory workers. He considered that the first cause of this degeneracy was the intemperate habits of the factory workers and their excessive smoking. Another was, that during the last thirty years they had brought their children up in a different manner than was formerly the case. Instead of giving them much milk when they weaned, they gave them tea and coffee night and morning, and sometimes three times a day. He had found that when those feeble children had milk twice a day, at 13 years of age to 16, they gained 15lb. the year on the average, while they only gained 4lb. in the year when they took tea or coffee. Another cause was that the *boys* from 12 *years old* to 20 either *smoked or chewed tobacco.*

ORPHAN WORKING SCHOOL.—At the recent public examination of this useful Institution it was shown that the inmates do not eat the bread of idleness. Thus it appears that during the year the 135 girls in the school had mended 16,789 stockings, mended and marked 11,677 articles, made 186 pinafores, 177 dresses trimmed, 270 hats new blocked and run, 426 toes and heels, and operated besides on 1,535, making the enormous total of 31,060 articles. No wonder then that, with such industrious habits, these girls are so prized as domestic servants.

SHAFTESBURY PARK ESTATE, WANDSWORTH.—A fierce attack has been recently made on Lord Shaftesbury by a Ritualistic clergyman because churches are not permitted to be built on this estate. It appears, however, that ample provision is made outside for members of the Established and Nonconformist churches—the united churches and chapels being eight. In addition the secretary states that the directors have provided a large hall, and

eventually there will be two on the estate, which the Church of England and ministers of other denominations will be allowed to use for the religious services. The halls will also be used for Sunday Schools. They have one already attended by over 300 children, the teachers being working men resident on the estate.

Notices of Meetings.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.

The twenty-first annual meeting of the above school recently took place in the large schoolroom. The Earl of Shaftesbury, as usual, occupied the chair.

Mr. George Holland read the report, which commenced by acknowledging the alteration which had taken place in the neighbourhood since the first establishment of the school. The decrease of the criminal population, and of drunkenness and vices of all sorts, was noticeable, but a large amount of work remained to be done among the neglected, ignorant, untaught, and poor population by which they were surrounded. In the enumeration of the various efforts to benefit the district, the report mentioned the Day Ragged School, and also the Children's Special Services, as having been eminently successful; one of the contrivances in connection with the latter having been the production of an entertainment which drew nearly 1,400 children to the school who had never been there before. Beyond these efforts on behalf of the young, there were the Band of Hope, a Farthing Bank, a Library, a scheme to give sickly children the benefit of country air, and many other attempts to benefit the bodies as well as the souls of the poor and neglected children of Whitechapel. Side by side with these were similar agencies for the adult population, Religious Services, Temperance Meetings, Bible Classes, Lodging House Visitation, a Benefit Society, the latter of which has raised a sum of £294 in thirteen months, in weekly subscriptions of 6d. Among the new features of work is the establishment of a Day Nursery, where mothers can, for a trifling charge, leave their infants under proper care. These little ones are named after the wild flowers of the forest, and each one admitted takes the name of its cot, and becomes a daisy or a primrose. Another agency is the Flower Mission, for the distribution of nosegays bound up with neatly-printed texts, which, it was stated, were much prized by the poor.

WHITECROSS STREET, ST. LUKE'S.

The annual meeting of the Whitecross Street Christian Mission (founded by the late George Vigeon) recently took place, when 180 persons partook of tea.

The meeting followed, with General Alexander in the chair. An address was given by the Rev. J. Poulton, who, referring to the death of the founder, said, although the Lord buries his workman, He carries on

his work still. In the present case we have a striking proof of this fact, for since the hall re-opened in February last you have got in working order Sewing Classes, Mothers' Meetings, Bible Classes, Prayer Meetings, Children's and Adults' Services, making in all about ten meetings a week. Through the active services of Mr. Dawson, the resident evangelist, who is daily working among the people, you have had seven genuine conversions, and four of them have gone safe home to heaven. One of them, the speaker said, he had visited by request, and was a very interesting case, an old Waterloo veteran, eighty-two years of age, now safe in the arms of Jesus. The meeting was excellent in spirit and purpose.

FARNINGHAM.

On Saturday, July 10th, the number of friends who visited the Home was unusually large, for a double attraction had been provided —Lord Hampton was to preside, and the Princess Mary was to give away the prizes. The buildings which constitute the Home are the Chapel, the Bradford School, which contains the upper schoolroom, with two class-rooms, and the Infant School, with babies' and an object room; the central building, containing residence for the superintendent and teachers, committee and visitors' rooms, the general stores, the bakehouse, the laundry, the five workshops, the engine-house, the swimming-bath, the ten cottage homes in which each family of thirty resides, under the care of a carefully selected father and mother, the infirmary, the stable, coach-house, and farm buildings. Near the gate a lodge is in course of erection, which is to be fitted up, so that the old boys can there stay a day or two when they have a holiday, or would revive the impressions of a moral nature, which residence, as it were, under the old roof, would be likely to create.

Lord Hampton presided at the luncheon, and in proposing success to the institution said what they saw around them was more eloquent in praise of the charity than any words of his. In the Home were 300 boys, rescued from wretchedness, immorality, and vice, and now being trained in habits of industry and virtue that they might enjoy future prosperity and happiness.

Mr. W. H. Willans, the treasurer, in responding, asked for aid to extinguish the present heavy debt of £3,500 on the Home, and for an increase in the number of annual subscriptions. In the afternoon the Duchess of Teck, accompanied by her husband, arrived at the Home. She first carefully inspected the different buildings, and afterwards her Royal Highness distributed the prizes won during the year. Each prize was the choice of the winner himself, and it may be remarked that almost every other lad chose either a writing-desk or a concertina. Lord Hampton moved a vote of thanks to the Duchess for her kindness in presenting the prizes; and the Duke of Teck, in responding for his wife, expressed her satisfaction at what she had witnessed, and a hope that she would again be able to visit the Home at some future time. Tea was then served to the visitors in the various cottages, and there were athletic sports afterwards.

RAGGED SCHOOL NURSERIES.

THE mortality of British infants is not only alarming, but it tells a painful tale of both parental neglect and of maternal ignorance. Thus statists estimate that not two in five children reach the age of five years. Gross mismanagement, bad nursing, and the general use of opiates to quiet "fractious" babes, are some of the causes assigned for this undue infantile death-rate. If to this is added the number who are *indirectly* slaughtered annually by wilful neglect, we have to report a list of infantile deaths which shows how little practical Christianity there is in this land of Bibles.

Much of the undue death-rate in infancy is doubtless ascribable to bad nursing. Mothers who are occupied indoors with domestic duties, or outside in charing or washing, devolve the nursing on their elder daughters, in many cases little more than babies themselves. In addition to this, there are few mothers who understand how to bring up their infants in such a way that a healthy physical system shall be built up. When, however, the mothers are compelled to go from home to work, how to manage infants in their absence is an enigma difficult to solve. This Gordian knot is therefore cut in one of two ways—they are either committed to the care of girls ignorant of their duties, or they are locked in the bedroom after being dosed with "Daffy's Elixir," or some other sedative which has opium for its base. No wonder, then, that coroners' inquests are being constantly held on infants who, being thus continually drugged, at length sleep the sleep of death!

In France the death-rate of infants is considerably below that of England, not because Frenchwomen love their infants more than Englishwomen, but because they are better managers than their British sisters. But in addition to this, nearly thirty years ago the *Créche* or cradle-school system was introduced into Paris, and from thence into above four hundred cities of France. For four sous a day infants are left in the *Crêche* from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

These cradle-rooms are well lighted, ventilated, and, what is of the utmost importance to health, most cheerful in aspect—brightened as they are by gaily-papered walls, and flowers in

full bloom. Six infants are placed under one nurse; the head matron being an experienced motherly woman who not only loves babies, but knows *how* to train them physically and morally. Suitable food is given at stated intervals under medical direction, so that opium or indigestible substances are, as they ought to be, "conspicuous by their absence." The mothers are chiefly fruit-sellers, fish-hawkers, or members of classes still lower down in the social scale. But all are grateful for the relief thus given, and all feel proud of the healthy appearance of their children as they call for them at night.

A similar experiment was initiated in Marylebone about twenty years ago by Mrs. Arthur Hobhouse and other influential ladies. But so few mothers seemed to appreciate the boon conferred, and funds to meet the expenses came in so scantily, that most dwindled away, and at length they expired of the *un*-"natural death" of starvation. But one cause of the failure of these nurseries was this — mothers often *forgot* (?) to call for their infants in the evening; and what to do with children thus abandoned was a subject of no little anxiety to the managers.

The most successful of the recently formed infant nurseries is that which was established by Mrs. Hilton at Stepney Causeway. In this *Crêche* the ladies of the royal family have shown a marked interest. It is on a larger scale than has ever been before attempted in this country, no less than 100 infants, ranging in age from three weeks to five years, being received daily, at the charge of twopence per diem. One novel feature in this *Crêche* is the connected infirmary for babies suffering from the usual infantile ailments. On an average it has twelve inmates. Growing out of the nursery is a home for twenty infants whose mothers are in hospitals or convalescent homes. By these various plans a good moral and sanitary work is being done in a densely populated and very poor district.

Seeing how ready Ragged School teachers are to adopt any plan for the social benefit of the adult poor among whom they labour, it would have been very unlike their usual practice had some of the schools not attached an infants' nursery to their other operations. To those Ragged Schools which have in this way helped poor mothers to help themselves, we propose briefly to refer.

1. Church Place, Paddington Green, was the first Ragged

School to open an infants' nursery. It was established about seventeen years ago; and having watched the experiment from the outset we can testify to the benefit it has conferred on a very poor but industrious class. Those of the mothers who are not occupied in the adjacent dustyards are employed as ironers or laundresses. The children are left in charge of an experienced motherly woman from seven in the morning until eight in the evening. For those who can walk threepence per day is charged; whilst for those who can only crawl—known by the name of "toddlers"—the fee is twopence. The nursery, which is on the upper story of the Ragged School, is airy and well lighted. Flowers in full bloom ornament the windows in summer; and plenty of toys sent by kind ladies amuse the infants. About 11,500 babies are yearly admitted; not of course different infants, for some are received over and over again. Above two-thirds of the total expense is contributed by the mothers, so that for about £10 per annum a very great boon is conferred on a needy district.

2. Chequer Alley, St. Luke's.—This nursery was opened about two years ago, for infants varying from three weeks to five years. In referring in their annual report to this effort, the committee state: "A more serious and more successful experiment was the attempt to establish a *Crèche*, or day nursery, for the young children of the poor working women. There are many of these whose earnings are absolutely needed to keep the wolf from the door of their poor homes, and who have been sadly perplexed how to provide for their little ones during their absence at work. They have sought to solve the problem, as a rule, in one of two ways—they have either locked the children *out*, or locked them *in*. The first plan was dangerous both to health and morals, and obviously impracticable in the case of very young children. The second plan, if safer, was not safe, for the children left alone fell into all manner of mischief. About a year ago, for instance, the eldest of a family of four little children—herself not six years old—set herself on fire while preparing some food for her brother and sisters, and was burned to death before assistance could be rendered. To such parents the committee offered to take care of their young children, and to provide food for them, at a charge of threepence a day. The number of children in the *Crèche* has risen to twenty, and only the want of accommodation confines it to that figure." One special feature of this infant nursery may be mentioned. A medical man visits the nursery thrice weekly, so that

every attention is paid to those infantile ailments which, if not treated at the outset, would probably become chronic or end in death.

3. George Yard, Whitechapel.—This is the youngest, but not the least in value, of this family of Ragged School Nurseries. Planted as it is amid the miles of vice and misery of the far east, it will, we doubt not, serve to further strengthen the influence of one of our best-worked Ragged Schools. This *Crêche* is known by the poetical appellation of the "Flowers of the Forest Nursery." It was opened last spring, and is adapted for twenty infants aged from two months to five years. Each infant is provided with a separate cot, and with every appliance needful for personal cleanliness. The cots are named after some wild flower, which is painted on a scroll over each little bed, and the child occupying it is known by its name of "Daisy," "Buttercup," &c. In addition, a text appropriate to the wild flower selected is painted over each cot. Thus, under the "Forget-me-not" we find this passage from Holy Writ—"Can a woman *forget* her sucking child? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee." Another feature in this infant nursery cannot be omitted—namely, that, as older girls are selected to assist in nursing, they receive practical training in this essential task.

The benefits incident to some schemes for social improvement are so patent that the mere description is sufficient to prove their value. The *Crêche* is eminently one of these. Yet a reference to two or three benefits which have already accrued will fitly close this sketch. They have practically taught many poor mothers the benefits of cleanliness and well-aired bedrooms—that it is more profitable in the long run to restrict themselves to home duties rather than to earn money away from it; and they have not only tended to reduce the infant death-rate, but to build up children healthily in body and mind.

We trust, then, that others of our large Ragged Schools will be led to attach this scheme to their other agencies for the good of the adult poor. The expense, compared with the benefit, is but trifling; as the mothers contribute a fair share of the working expenses. Beneficial as our infant nurseries have already proved to both mother and babe, we hope this plan of social usefulness will be speedily so extended that before long we shall have to report of the Ragged School Nurseries—"their name is Legion; for they are many."

FAR-EAST LONDONERS.

BY THE COUNTESS SPENCER.

THE poorest classes in London are very poor. There is poverty enough in our villages, and in our country towns, and among our scattered rural population; but in London there are thousands in a depth of poverty and wretchedness, of vice and ignorance and despondency, of which those whose experience does not lie among the crowded districts in the East of London have little notion.

And it must be admitted that this wretchedness is much increased by the faults of the poor. Too often they are actually extravagant—"a feast to-day and a fast to-morrow" is their principle of action. They are without forethought; they make no effort after cleanliness or tidiness of any kind; they will let their children grow up playing in the gutters, without caring to send them even to the Ragged School to give them a chance in the future; they will let their girls grow up in absolute ignorance of what is meant by right and wrong, vice and virtue, and will even hire them out as servants to women whose miserable subsistence is earned by sin. They have no thought of another life, and their only solace in this is the ginshop. But all are not of this character. There are many poor in London of whom a very different picture might be drawn, and tales might be told of patient, enduring, unaided struggles against poverty and sickness. And where it is otherwise, is the blame to be laid wholly to the charge of the wretched ones whom we have described?

Let us consider some of the enormous difficulties and temptations to which they are exposed by their condition and circumstances in a few of the more crowded parts of the East of London. We have spoken of the frequent extravagance of the poor. During the period of the Crimean war, and for many years subsequently, there was abundance of work to be had in London in most branches of industry, and a corresponding advance in the rate of wages, so that men who had been earning one guinea a week found themselves able to earn two. But they had never learned how to spend wisely, far less how to save carefully. It is hard enough to bring up a family in London, let alone saving; and if there is now and then a penny to spare, what is the use of saving pennies? This is their mode of reasoning; so the odd pennies are given to the children to buy "sweeties." A rise in wages comes, but brings little or no permanent improvement in their condition; good bedding, furniture, or underclothing being seldom purchased, even during their years of plenty. To quote one of themselves, a native resident in one of our East-end parishes, "they just ate and drank themselves to waste." The London labourer or artisan has hard work,

and really needs strengthening food. The first thing he does with his extra cash is to have a beefsteak for breakfast as well as for dinner, and perhaps for supper too, for they have not yet been taught to be economical in their housekeeping, and have a great dislike to cold meat, which they call "poor sort of food." If there is any money left, it is to be feared he too often spends it in "beer and skittles," or worse amusements, still giving his wife the same meagre allowance as before, to feed and clothe herself and the hungry children.

Then comes a change, as in 1866. The day on which the failure of the firm of Overend and Gurney became known is still spoken of in one part of the East of London as "Black Thursday." The paralysis of trade caused by that failure has been aggravated by other causes combining with it, and has never yet been recovered. Thousands of men find themselves thrown out of work. Dependent upon them are numbers of small shopkeepers, costermongers, hawkers, and petty dealers of all kinds; poverty descends like a cloud on the whole population; their "bits of things," their furniture (if they possessed any), their clothes, are pawned or sold; the proceeds are soon exhausted, and then nothing is left but the workhouse, or, at best, an outdoor pittance from the parish, and beggary eked out by an occasional small and low-paid job of work for the most fortunate. Then comes disease, fever, almost, if not actual starvation; the sickly wife gets out of heart; there seems to be no one in the world to care for her or to help her; what is the use of trying to be decent or tidy? she sinks down in despair and falls more or less into the state we have described above, finding drink her only friend.—*Fraser's Magazine.*

STEPHEN THE YEOMAN RAGGED SCHOOL,

MARIGOLD PLACE, BERMONDSEY.

ANYTHING more hopelessly dark and wretched than was the condition of the neighbourhood when this Ragged School was opened, in October, 1859, it would be difficult to conceive. Missionaries, Bible-women, and schoolroom were "conspicuous by their absence." The adults were steeped in ignorance and vice, and in more senses than one children "fainted for hunger in the top of every street." *Now*, though there still exist much deplorable ignorance and misery, the condition of the homes around is vastly improved.

The door opened in 1859, and at first kept open with much difficulty, has widened year by year, until the work, commenced among some fourscore unruly boys, has long embraced a far larger number, together with their sisters and parents, who are now brought, both in

the school and by their own fireside, under the softening influence of the Gospel of Christ, which has been made unto many the power of God unto salvation.

In apparent ignorance of what was, and to a less extent still is, the state of things, there are some who object that recent legislative Acts render such institutions as this unnecessary. It may be well to remind these critics that until very recently the claims of the hundred thousand untaught children in London had been without any recognition from our legislators, and that up to the present moment there is no relief from the duties which their long indifference imposes on those who really believe that men have eternal destinies, and that none but Christ can fit them for a happy eternity.

When we first visited the school in 1860 it was planted in Marigold Street, amid the squalor and vice incident to a river-side population. Though the two parlours thrown into one were not fit for thirty, about double that number occupied the space. So low was the roof, that our heads touched it when we essayed to address the rough boys who had been attracted.

But all this is now altered, and the building erected in 1863 in Marigold Place, with space to accommodate 250, has every modern appliance for educational purposes. This is chiefly due to Miss Charlesworth, the author of "Ministering Children." As that lady placed £100 in the hands of Lord Shaftesbury towards opening a new school in the south of London, by the advice of Messrs. Gent and Hytche, after a visitation of the district, it was given as a donation to the committee, on the condition that they provided a better building. This was readily acceded to, and the new building was named "Stephen the Yeoman," in memory of a noble specimen of a British farmer whose life Miss Charlesworth has written.

The institution now embraces Sunday, Day, and Night Schools; a Savings Bank and Clothing Club; a flourishing Mothers' Meeting, and a Band of Hope. All are doing a good work among a population estimated at 36,000, whose religion is at zero.

In winter the Sunday School averages 108 in the afternoon, and upwards of 200 in the evening. But, like most schools in this district, it is undermanned. Thus we have seen twenty scholars in charge of one teacher—or double the number most teachers can manage.

The attendance at the Day School is 130. As it is included in the School Board list of "Efficient Schools," the Board visitors constantly send recruits who are too ragged and unkempt for their schools. The daily Scripture teaching has been fruitful. The answers given are generally satisfactory, and often the wish is expressed to be "one of Jesus'

lambs," even by children who are brought up in the midst of evil influences. There was much sickness and several deaths amongst the scholars during the past year. In one family three little ones were taken home in five weeks; one of them, four years old, just before her death said to her father, "I wish you would meet me in heaven." Another was a girl of eight years, whose attachment to the school, and the earnest attention she gave to the Bible-lesson, had long indicated love for that Saviour of whom the Scriptures testify. During a painful illness she was most gentle and patient, and was frequently singing the beautiful hymns sung in the school. Even while her mind wandered, her lips framed the same sweet words, and she "sang a hymn to Jesus." Many of her schoolfellows attended her funeral, and sang over her little grave, "Safe in the arms of Jesus." One father when out of work, and much cast down because he had no bread for his children, was brought to tears by one of them singing, "In some way or other the Lord will provide." The father had never asked for "daily bread," nor ever attended the house of God; but who shall say of the seed thus sown by these little sowers what the harvest will be? Such instances might be multiplied, but these may suffice to prove the value of *early, daily* Scripture teaching. £2 11s. 6d. was received for children's dinners, which, with a balance from 1874 of £1 8s. 11d., and contributions in kind, enabled the teacher to give 2,090 dinners last winter.

For many years there was a large Night School attached to the institution; it included some of the roughest lads in London. Before the school was opened, they used the school wall as a kind of racket ground, and often pursued all the girls of the district with indescribable whoopings. After being discontinued some months—Children's Services replacing the Night School—it has been reopened with every prospect of taming, as heretofore, some of these poor children of neglect.

That whilst the secular and religious interests of the scholars are so prominently cared for, their future as bread-winners is not neglected, is shown by the following fact. In 1874 the Bermondsey Auxiliary Sunday School Union held an industrial exhibition of the affiliated schools. The children of this Ragged School furnished a stall with work done *in* the school. It was not only generally admired, but two of the youthful exhibitors received, as tangible proof of their success, the prizes awarded for wicker-work and rug-making.

Prominent among the means of usefulness for the spiritual and temporal welfare of adults is the Mothers' Meetings. The aggregate weekly attendance has been 58, and the amounts paid in by the mothers for clothing, £18 8s. 8d. The Coal Club, into which the

mothers paid £12 12s., the Loan Blanket Society, lending out 44 blankets, and the Maternity Society, have each carried on their useful labours, and the help thus afforded has proved very useful to many poor families. The Bible only is read and taught in these meetings. Miss Charlesworth, Mrs. Grove, Mrs. Haslam, and Mr. Arthur Barclay have addressed the mothers, and from the earnest attention which they have received, we trust that a real work for souls is going on. One of the mothers lately became a member of a Christian communion, and has evinced by her life a real change of heart. Three of the old scholars, now wives and mothers, are members of this meeting.

The Band of Hope, with its 130 members, and the adult Total Abstinence Society, with its 56 members, are doing a great work in a notoriously drunken locality. At every meeting the Saviour is pointed out as the sinner's only true refuge, so that the conductors do not supersede the Gospel by temperance.

These facts and figures fully show what a power for social and spiritual good is the Marigold Place Ragged School. We doubt not, however, that, as in the case of every other Ragged School, much more good than is outwardly discernible has been effected. For faith assures us that the precious seed of the Word, which is sown from day to day and from Sunday to Sunday, cannot be sown in vain. We may then look hopefully for the ripening of the harvest, and prayerfully to the Lord of the harvest to give the teachers the joy of gathering many precious souls into His garner. If sowing time has been long, the sheaves may be found all the heavier when "sower and reaper rejoice together."

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF A RAGGED CHURCH.

The late John Ashworth gives this sketch of the first service held in the Rochdale Chapel of the Destitute in 1858. In one of his "Strange Tales," entitled "My New Fireside," he narrates his visit to a lodging-house to beat up recruits. He says: "I pulled off my hat, bowed to the company, and began to distribute my bills. One young man, with a short pipe in his mouth, twisted my paper into a spill to light his tobacco, then burst out laughing, and began to dance a jig in the midst of the floor."

John Ashworth soon turned the battle against this would-be scoffer, by asking him to read the bill of invitation to the rest, when the poor fellow fairly broke down at the words, "Jesus loves you, and died to save you." His voice faltered; he quietly stepped down from the chair on which he had stood, put down the paper, and said, "I wish I

had not read that; it reminds me of better days." It was necessary that Jenny Lind—a street singer—should finish the reading. When she had done, a surly-looking man growled, "I thought there was naught in heaven, earth or hell, that cared for us, but it seems there is somebody does."

Wishing to get some one to volunteer, I laid my hand on the shoulder of a thin man, who was trying to divide his hair, and requested him to give a challenge to the whole house. There was a general shout from all, that "If I got him I should have the worst in the lot; they should like to see Bill Guest in a chapel." "Yes," said a wood-leg man, "if Bill goes, I go." "And me," said another. "And me," said a third. "And me," said Jenny Lind. "And me," said an old man with large spectacles. Bill very coolly observed that "They had better mind what they were doing, or he would surprise some of them." But the whole fifteen declared they would go if he went. "Then I go," said Guest; "and now let me see which of you dare show the white feather." We bargained that I was to call for them at six o'clock, to show them the way.

Another group of three was induced to go by the present of a clean shirt given to one of them; but of a company of idlers on a bridge, to whom bills were being given, one broke forth thus: "Mr. Ashworth, look at me! You see a man that deserves damnation, if ever man did. I am the unworthy son of the best of fathers and mothers. They set me a good example; but I got amongst wicked companions, have spent in cursed drink hundreds of pounds, wandered from home, and now I am a wretched outcast." He ended, however, by promising to attend the service.

On the successful evening when the ragged flock were invited, Mr. Ashworth says: "I went home to tea, but could not eat. I went upstairs, and, falling on my knees, poured out my soul to God for help. 'Lord, help me! Lord, help me!' was all I could say, though I remained long in prayer.

Exactly at six I called on my sixteen frinds at the lodging-house. My entrance was the signal for a general move. Bill Guest had finished dividing his hair, and had done his best to look smart. Boz, or Boswell, had fitted on his leg, and all were instantly ready. Not one had shown the 'white feather.' They laughed at each other, and were all greatly excited. 'Who will lead up?' was bawled out by a red-slop man; and it was agreed we should go two abreast, I and Boz (the wood-legged man) being the first. In this order we marched down King Street, over the iron bridge, through the Butts, to the preaching-room. All the way we attracted much attention, some remarking we were the 'awkward squad,' others that we were

going to the rag-shop. But what was to them a cause of merriment was to me a source of great anxiety. As I walked quietly on with the wood-legged man, I could not keep back my tears. 'Lord, help me!' was still my earnest prayer.

On my arriving at the room, I found my friend with the new shirt, and his two companions, had already taken their seats; also three well-known characters—Lis Dick, Leach, and Sprowel; two shillings would have been a good price for the wardrobe of all three; then followed the prodigal son and four others—in all, twenty-seven persons.

I had provided the Religious Tract Society's penny hymn-book, and handed one to each; then, taking my place behind a table, I gave out the page. Few could find the hymn, but all pretended to do so; and when I set the tune, the Old Hundredth, I found that not one of the men, and only one of the women, could join in singing, and that one was the so-called Jenny Lind. I could have well dispensed with her help, for she began singing before she knew what the tune was, and she had a screeching voice, the effect of which on my nerves was something like that produced by the sharpening of a saw with a file: this caused a general titter through the congregation. I had intended to sing five verses, but was glad to give up with three. Whatever Jenny's success was in singing in the streets and public-houses I know not; but I know I was afraid to join her a second time, though my friends give me credit for being a tolerably good singer. So ludicrous had been the whole performance that many of the congregation were almost convulsed with suppressed laughter, and I did not think it prudent to engage in prayer until they were in a more serious state of mind, so I requested them to sit down. I then began to tell them all about my reasons for beginning a place of worship for the destitute, of my visit to London, what I there saw, and the vow I made; told them how I had broken my vow, been afflicted, and again vowed and prayed for help; told them of my conversion to God, how long I had served Him, and how happy I was in His love; but, above all, told them of the love of Jesus Christ in dying to save their souls from hell, and bring them to heaven; pointed out the dreadful consequences of rejecting God's mercy, and the misery of a life of sin, and besought them all, at once, to seek salvation through the shed blood of the Redeemer.

I have spoken to many congregations, but to none more attentive than these twenty-seven. Oh, how my soul did yearn in love to those miserable beings. The young prodigal—the wanderer from home—the wretched son of praying parents, writhed in agony; some wept, and all were serious. I then proposed prayer, but told them that they

might stand, sit, or kneel, just as they liked; but they all knelt down, and ere we rose the Spirit of God worked with power. Lis Dick and the old man with the large spectacles remained on their knees after the others had risen; they both afterwards confessed that they had not prayed for years before."

Out of this service has grown a large Ragged School, Week-night Services and Schools, and Domiciliary Visitation by two earnest Bible-women.

If any of our readers wish to see a reproduction of this strange congregation in London, they have only to visit Field Lane (where the first London Ragged Church was organised in 1852), Brewer's Court, Gray's Yard, or King Edward Street Ragged Schools any Sunday morning at eleven. The united congregations in winter of social waifs exceeds 1,100. Many of these are living proofs that the Holy Spirit can reach the hearts of the vilest, and fit them for one of the "many mansions" in our Father's house.

PENDLETON RAGGED SCHOOL, MANCHESTER.

This well-worked provincial Ragged School embraces Sunday Schools, Children's Services, a Band of Hope, a Pure Literature Society, and Mission Services for adults.

The Ragged School, as compared with 1873, has increased one-fifth in number; the scholars too have become more regular and orderly, and never has the work amongst our young people appeared more hopeful than of late. For eight months a scholars' *Prayer* and *Conversational Meeting* has been held on the Sunday night at the close of the school, and often attended by over 100 young persons, not a few of whom have been truly converted. It is pleasing to record that when volunteers were asked to go into the streets with invitations to children not attending any other place, a number of the scholars most cheerfully gave their services, bringing in about 150 boys and girls, till we had not accommodation sufficient for the fresh comers. Since last February a *Sunday Afternoon School* has been held for poor children not connected with any other school, and the *attendance* has been from 70 to 163. The *attendance* at the *Sunday Night* School in November reached 501, and in December 566. The last quarter in the year the average attendance per night was 463, as compared with 373 in former years. The *teachers* and monitors have also increased to 38.

Of special note we have to mention a decided advance as regards one of the oldest and best agencies of our association—viz., the *House-to-house Sale of Periodicals*. Last year 8,520 of our own halfpenny

Visitor and 9,552 penny publications (*Cottager, British Workman*, pictorial narrative sheets, &c.), being thus distributed. Also about 2,000 *Band of Hope Reviews*, &c., among the Ragged School scholars, with copies of the Gospels and other books. Good literature thus circulated we know will have many readers. Deserving young persons are encouraged by letting them have at a cheap rate periodicals to dispose of amongst the working people in the neighbourhood.

A Children's Religious Service has been held each Wednesday night, the attendance of late averaging 116 per night. We attach much importance to scholars having in this way the opportunity in the middle of the week to come in contact with the same Bible truths they were taught on the previous Sabbath, and when it is so likely that good impressions then made may be deepened.

The same children have also had frequent opportunities of enjoying themselves in the *recreation rooms*, the deserving scholars having for certain nights free tickets for an hour or so, and by purchasing a half-penny periodical they have a ticket for a longer time, including the whole of Saturday afternoon or evening: 110 have been present on several occasions. Besides being thus kept from unsuitable places, they have had abundant means of harmless enjoyment, and at the same time of possessing the 2,000 or so pictorial numbers before mentioned.

Temperance principles have been inculcated at the *Band of Hope* meeting held each week with varying numbers ranging from 30 to 210. At various entertainments much temperance literature has been circulated. The juvenile and adult Sons of Temperance Societies and Good Templars' Lodge, located at the Hall, have done much good.

A *free Night* School was held weekly in the winter months. Often 110 were present.

The monthly lecture entertainments, to which members have had free admission, have included lectures, dissolving views, service of song, drum and fife band of refuge boys, brass band, &c., the number in attendance per night with friends averaging 520.

As regards the adult Mission Services, in certain respects there has been a falling-off. The services for the poor, parents, &c., have been held each Sunday afternoon, with an average attendance of 48, and night attendance 91, and Wednesday evening attendance 33. There have been 13 *Open-air* Services, average attendance 180; 51 *Prayer Meetings*, attendance 31. There has been considerable *visitation*, house-to-house, with *tracts*. Sometimes 200 visits were paid on Sunday. The pictorial tracts, &c., and scripture slips distributed and at meetings have numbered 101,000.

One of the London Evangelisation Society's staff of preachers, Mr.

Thomas Johnson, for a fortnight, last November conducted special services in our Hall, much interest being excited, some appearing to be savingly impressed. About 400 attended.

Considering the few really earnest workers who in this locality can be got to connect themselves with organisations not of a denominational character, the amount of work and results as regards the past year have been such as to satisfy the friends who have subscribed the funds. Our prayer is that He who moves the hearts of men, will send this and every Ragged School more true helpers, those who feel for the careless and neglected, and who in view of the very large number of the lower classes living without God in the world, will zealously seek that they and their children through Christ may be blessed.

DWELLINGS OF THE POOR.

In our number for April last (*ante*, p. 73) we called the attention of our readers to the moral and social evils incident to the "rookeries' where poverty hides itself. We also indicated how much the surroundings of such districts tended to thwart the labours of the Ragged School teacher, seeing what was done in school was too often *un*done, either in the alleys or the homes of the scholars. The wonder, indeed, is that, with the vice rampant in such districts, we have been able to do anything for the social and spiritual welfare of the denizens. But it shows that no one, however low in the social scale, is Gospel-proof, especially when it is declared in that tender spirit which ever characterises the Ragged School teacher.

It was stated that the Government had at last introduced a measure to remedy or rather to *crush* such crying physical and moral evils, and we gave an outline of the Act introduced by the Home Secretary. This plan, with some modifications, has received the Royal Assent. But with the adverse pecuniary interests at stake, the local vestries will have to be carefully watched, lest, like many another good Act of Parliament, it becomes a dead letter.

The following is a synopsis of the Act:—

The preamble recites that various portions of many great cities and boroughs are so built and the buildings thereon so densely inhabited as to be highly injurious to the moral and physical welfare of the inhabitants, and that many places are unfit for habitation, and fevers and diseases are constantly generated, causing death and loss of health, not only in the courts and alleys, but also in other parts of the cities and boroughs. It happens that, because the houses belong

to several owners, it is not in the power of one owner to make such alterations as are necessary to the public health; that it is necessary for the public health that "many of such houses, courts, and alleys should be pulled down, and such portions of the said cities and boroughs should be reconstructed." And provision has now been made for that purpose, and also made for dwellings for the working classes who may be displaced.

In thirty-one clauses the objects of the Act have been worked out with the aid of the schedule annexed. The three parts of the statute are divided into—unhealthy areas, provisions ancillary to improvement schemes, and general provisions.

The local authorities are to carry out the Act. On a local authority being satisfied by official representation of the unhealthiness of a district, it is to make a scheme for its improvement. In the City of London the local authority is the Commission of Sewers; in the metropolis the Board of Works; and elsewhere the Urban sanitary districts. There is power given to form an improvement fund, and to borrow money for the purposes of the Act, with general powers to carry it into execution.

The first step to enforce the provisions is by an "official representation," which in the metropolis is to be by the medical officer of health of any district Board or Vestry, or by a medical officer to the local authority. A medical officer acting in pursuance of the Act is to make such representation whenever he sees cause to make the same; and if two or more justices of the peace in the district or twelve or more persons liable to be rated complain to him of the unhealthiness of any area, it will be the duty of the medical officer to inspect and make an official representation. But without action in the manner stated, the statute as to sanitary purposes will remain a dead letter.

We are glad to learn that preliminary steps have been taken, under the provisions of the Act, to pull down some of the rookeries which disgrace London. Hence, official representations have been made to the Metropolitan Board of Works by the Holborn District Board, affecting about 14 acres in all, on the east side of Gray's Inn Lane, and by the Whitechapel District Board, with reference to an area lying between Dock Street and St. Peter's Court. The localities have been inspected by Sir J. Hogg and a large committee of the Metropolitan Board, with a view to immediate action.

SCHOLARS' PRIZES.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1875.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the schools of the Union, have again decided on giving prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months and upwards, and coming within the following

CONDITIONS:

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.
2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.
3. Having kept in one situation for twelve months, ending in 1875, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the prize, provided they are in the second place on December 31st, 1875. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.
4. If they have not before received a money prize, they will now be entitled to a prize of seven shillings and sixpence, as well as a card, provided the committee of the school recommending them will pay two shillings and sixpence of this sum.
5. Those who have received a money prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a prize card, and a book in value not less than two shillings and sixpence.
6. They must have been in regular attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to female domestic servants.
7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, and girls working in jute, cartridge, and similar factories, or earning more than ten shillings per week, will not be eligible for the prizes.
8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1875.
9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from the application, if the application papers be not fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the Office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 15th, 1876.

The prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the committee of the school may determine; but if given in money, it should be placed to the child's account in a savings bank, with a view to induce provident habits.

JOSEPH G. GENT, *Secretary*.

Hints for Teachers.

TEMPER IN THE CLASS.

"IT must needs be that offences come" especially in Sunday Ragged Schools. The scholars are young, various in character, with a natural flow of good spirits, and with their share of the general bent toward ill rather than good which we all confess before our Divine Father. Levity will sometimes break out just where it ought not, and movements be made that are objectionable. How to deal positively with these excrescences on class life cannot be stated in an article or written in a book. A certain nameless, indescribable faculty in a good teacher provides for each separate emergency.

But we can assert with confidence that the very worst course possible is to lose one's temper. For consider—

(1) The slips made by the pupils are sometimes excusable. A good man, for example, gesticulates, or particularises awkwardly, or does something else ridiculous. Now we expect the children to feel when we speak solemn things, to weep when we mention mournful things; why should we wonder if they smile when we do ridiculous things? We had better recognise this fact, and, instead of making cast-iron and worthless rules against nature, correct the absurdities in ourselves that elicit mirth and contract the muscles of the youthful cheeks.

(2) Any display of angry feeling does mischief. To begin with, it often makes one laughable. We laugh at incongruities; and can anything be more incongruous than a Christian teacher, commending the peace and patience and joy of the Christian life, suddenly thrown into impotent and irrepressible rage by a child's freak, which perhaps shows thoughtlessness rather than wickedness?

(3) Any step we take while "in a temper," is almost certain to be wrong. Our punishments will be apt to be excessive, indiscriminate, or ill-adapted to the case. To shoot every tenth man in a mutinous regiment may be a military necessity, but punishments so inflicted by teachers ruling by moral means and for moral purposes are worse than useless. To pick out some one who may have been open to detection just because he was a novice in wrong, and punish him because somebody must be punished, is extremely mischievous. It offends the natural sense of justice of the scholars. It makes the class your enemies, and friends of the victim, and seems to them to justify future retaliation, and often crushes and sorely wounds

the least guilty of the party. Scholars conscious of such wrong have been ever after reluctant attendants, and have taken the earliest opportunity to sever the connection between them and such teachers.

Bad temper is by itself a sufficient disqualification in any teacher who is expected to produce moral results. But, on the other hand, patient, good-tempered kindness will win love, break down prejudice, and take possession of human hearts.

If, with a competent knowledge of the lesson, and a fair amount of power to interest, you cannot rule and manage a class—if every now and then you have to call upon the superintendent to remove a boy or girl, or get him expelled—you may almost regard it as conclusive proof of your unfitness for the work. You had better get out of the way, and leave your place to some one with more grace, or more good sense.

Children's Page.

THE BAG OF BISCUITS.

LITTLE Emma had heard a great deal about London, and there were few places she wanted to see so much. She was not a little pleased to hear that she was going to England with her papa, mamma, and aunt.

The day after her arrival in London was very fine. Soon after breakfast Emma ran to remind her aunty of a promised walk through the great city.

"Where are you going to take me, aunty?" said she.

"Nowhere in particular, my dear," replied her aunt. "We shall go together when the business of sight-seeing regularly begins."

Emma's aunt amused herself with watching the child's enthusiasm and pleasure. But by degrees Emma grew silent, and her step began to lose some of its eagerness.

"Somebody is getting a little tired, I fancy," her aunt said at last.

"No, it isn't that," replied Emma.

"A little hungry, then?" said her aunt.

"No, it is isn't that either," said Emma.

"What is it, then, my darling?" asked her aunt, becoming quite concerned.

Emma's lip quivered as she answered:—"I didn't expect to see so many poor people in London. I expected to see beautiful things, and—"

"Beautiful people," said her aunt, trying to give a playful turn to the conversation.

"I did think the children would be beautiful," replied Emma; "but instead of that, they are so poor, and so dirty! And there are little girls not so old as I am, carrying babies about, and looking so tired."

Her aunt, anxious to turn her thoughts, said: "Come, let us have something to eat, for it is one o'clock."

They entered a shop, and Emma was soon in possession of a large paper of biscuits. For a time she

forgot the sad sights she had just witnessed. A dirty, half-naked little child ran against them as they passed into the street. Quick as thought, Emma put some of her biscuits into its hand. With them went a smile worth a thousand biscuits. The child had never had such a wonderful thing in its life. It looked at Emma, then at its handful of treasure, then darted off down a narrow lane and disappeared.

So they went on. A pale, patient-looking little girl, not more than six years old, was toiling along before them, a heavy basket on one arm and a baby on the other.

"What makes you carry that great boy, little girl?" asked Emma.

"Please, miss, he won't walk," replied the child.

"Perhaps he'll walk if you give him these," said Emma. "Don't give them all to him; eat some yourself."

They passed on; the baby got down on the strength of the biscuits, and walked on, eating them with great joy, while the weary little sister's arm had leisure to rest. She wondered very much why anybody should give biscuits to her.

Meanwhile Emma saw down a narrow street half a dozen little meagre girls playing "keep shop" on a doorstep. She stole softly behind them, to see what the poor things had for their amusement: a withered radish, a few bits of cabbage-leaf, an old knife-handle, and two or three buttons. "Here's something better to play shop with," said a soft voice, and down came Emma's little hail-storm, pelting the heads and hands of the astonished group. She herself fled before they had time to recover from their amazement, but it was not hard to imagine their pleasure.

"We ought to go home now," said her aunt, as she looked at her watch. "You can dispose of the rest on our way."

Ah! how many poor little boys, who hardly knew what pleasure meant, were filled with delight and surprise during that one walk! How many tired feet trod the pavement less wearily because Emma trod it also!

Her aunt went home, and Emma began to talk over the adventures of the day. "It seemed very nice at the time," said Emma; "but they are just as poor and dirty as they were before, and perhaps they are hungry now."

"That may be true, but it is something to give even one moment's pleasure to a poor forlorn child; yes, one moment's."

"Oh, I am so glad you think so, aunty."

"Besides, with some of them the pleasure will last for years. Some of them will remember it twenty years hence, and perhaps tell their little children about it."

"But I should like to do something for these poor children besides just pleasing them."

"And so should I," said her aunt. "So before we go to bed we will kneel down and pray for every one of them. We will beg our kind Father in heaven to have pity on them, and to do for them what we cannot do. Don't you suppose that Jesus walks the streets of London just as He used to walk through the cities of Judea? I do; and I believe He often goes about showering blessings on poor little suffering children, just as you showered your biscuits on

them. He has shown it by putting it into the hearts of so many kind people to open Ragged Schools for poor half-starved children. So if we beg Him to-night to bless and comfort every poor child we have met to-day, why shouldn't we believe that He will bless them?"

They knelt down together, side by side, and prayed the prayer of faith. Little Emma rose from her knees and went to bed in peace. Who can tell what were the issues of her first walk in London!

E.

Correspondence.

LETTERS TO SCHOLARS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—On perusing the last volume of your Magazine I was not only pleased, but edified, by reading several letters from former scholars in Ragged Schools to their old teachers. Cynics have doubted whether the poor feel any gratitude towards their benefactors; but these letters—and it seems that they are only a sample—put such doubts to flight. Never did I see a greater proof that true Christian love—not mere icy patronage—will always evoke gratitude than is afforded by letters which are as honourable to the teachers as to the scholars.

This leads me to inquire whether Ragged School teachers as a class—I know that there are splendid exceptions—sufficiently avail themselves of the plan of usefulness incident to corresponding with their scholars. Many still in the class would doubtless be materially influenced by such letters; whilst others who have entered the labour market far away, it may be from the school, would feel that the former link need not be broken, and that at a most critical period of life. Moreover, those teachers who could not spare time to visit the homes of present or former scholars, could readily find leisure to write a few lines of Christian sympathy. And who could estimate the ultimate results on the minds of their scholars, when these letters were re-perused years after the teacher had gone to his eternal rest?

The "Children's Special Service Mission" gives the following testimony to the spiritual value of such correspondence:—

"Letter-writing is a still more important means of usefulness. The children value and treasure up their letters, and those who are really in earnest read them over and over again, many times a day. The parents see them also, and the Gospel message may thus be taken into many an ungodly home.

Many of the workers in the Mission now give themselves especially

to the letter-writing. Sometimes, when services have been held in a distant place, the work has been carried on for a long time afterwards by correspondence with the children, a packet of letters being sent occasionally, through their own teachers. The results have been very cheering, and the teachers themselves have been stimulated and encouraged in their labours. In connection with our Central Services several of the members of a Young Women's Bible Class are earnestly engaged in this important branch of the work."

I may add that I never heard of letters to scholars being treated lightly; but all who thus correspond, intimate that every letter brings an affectionate reply. In fact, the bulk of our scholars are so proud of such a recognition, that they almost invariably read their letters to their parents and companions, and thus their influence extends to quarters which were not even thought of by the writer.

I trust that the hint thus briefly given will be adopted by every Ragged School teacher; and that by this and every legitimate means, we shall be found "wise to win souls."

Yours, &c.,

QUARTUS.

A RAGGED SCHOOL FLOWER MISSION.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—One of our most novel and interesting works is that of "The Flower Mission." Small bunches of wild and other flowers are tied together, and with them a text printed or written, so arranged as to form a small bouquet. A basketful is then taken out into the back streets and courtways to be given to the people, who flock around to get them. Many profitable conversations have been held, and words of sympathy spoken to the people. The texts are often read aloud by them. Sometimes these little nosegays are taken into the sick-room, and the sick one is delighted: "Let me see," said one, "what the text is this time."

It is a pretty sight to see the children leave George Yard school-room, each with a bunch of flowers; and it is encouraging to know that the flowers are taken home, and the texts read, and sometimes learned off by heart.

When distributing some flowers in a lodging-house, a woman said, "These make my memory leap back thirty years."

Who shall say what the softening influence of flowers may do; or what blessed results may flow from the portions of God's word thus circulated?

I am, yours, &c.,

G. HOLLAND.

George Yard Ragged School, Whitechapel.

Ragged School Union.

THE monthly meetings of the Committee were held on September 6th and 10th, and Conference meetings were held September 8th and 22nd. All four were held at 1, Exeter Hall. Further Conferences to be held October 6th and 20th.

The contributions during August amounted to £39 15s. 4d.; the payments to £312 9s. 9d.

The grants in aid of teachers' salaries for the quarter ordered for payment amounted to £107 2s. 6d., and other payments to £72 5s. 8d.

The following grants were ordered:—

To Butler's Place School, £12 annually.

To Menotti Street School, a donation of £2 2s. and £12 yearly.

To Poplar, £2 10s. for school materials.

To York Place, the grant of £10 increased to £26 13s. 4d. per year.

To St. Mary's, Lambeth, £10.

To Shadwell, a donation of £2 10s., and the promise of £10 towards a Night School, if opened.

To Nichol Street, a donation of £30, and £24 yearly.

To Lancaster Street, £15.

To Northey Street, £6.

To Ernest Street, £2 10s.

Applications for aid were received from New Tothill Street School, and from Plough Court.

Notice was received of a legacy bequeathed by the late Mrs. McAll.

Mr. John Kirk was appointed as assistant Inspector, whose special work will be in relation to the Night Schools, their extension and efficiency.

CONFERENCES ON NIGHT RAGGED SCHOOLS.

ON September 8 and 22 Conferences were held at the office of the Ragged School Union, when the subject of the extension of Night Schools for the destitute and rough classes was considered. The friends present were mostly from the East of London.

Conferences will be convened in the same office on October 6 and 20 for the friends in the North of London and other parts.

If needful, the Conferences will be continued fortnightly. Tea at 7 p.m.

Facts and Scraps.

NEWSPAPERS AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.—We are glad to report that the daily newspapers showed their interest in Ragged Schools by gratuitously inserting the appeals of local officials in behalf of their summer excursions. By these means a very large sum was raised.

GOLDEN LANE, ST. LUKE'S.—As the autumn of 1873 closed, coals reached an almost prohibitory price to the very poor people of the courts and alleys. Fearing lest any aged and sick ones should die through lack of sufficient external heat to their poor emaciated bodies, a fund was started, and fifty tons of good coals were purchased at cost price of Mr. Herbert Clark, and stored away for winter use. The tickets were sold by the female missionary to the sick, aged, and destitute at the following prices:—7lbs., 1d; 14lbs., 1½d.; 28lbs., 3d. This plan has been successfully carried out in the winter of 1874-5. The boon is so great that we heartily advise all Ragged Schools to adopt the same plan.

RUFFORD'S BUILDINGS, ISLINGTON. — In the autumn of 1874 a Bible-woman, with the aid of Mrs. Ranyard's Society, was employed by this Ragged School to visit the hideous dens for which this locality is notorious. Since her appointment £3 9s. 10½d. has been received for Bibles—chiefly from Irish Romanists.

SPECIAL PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.—The first Sunday in September was set apart for prayer for the early conversion of children. Many sermons on that day specially pressed this matter on all Christian parents.

EDINBURGH SUNDAY BREAKFASTS.—These breakfasts, which are held every Sunday morning in the drill hall, have neither fallen off in attendance nor in interest. There are usually present upwards of 500 people from the lowest districts in the city, and a very sad picture they present. After breakfast, the great majority of them give respectful attention to those who address them, and some of them seem impressed by simple gospel truth. Mr. Robert Wilson, architect, who superintends these breakfasts, is assisted by a staff of earnest Christian young men and women.

Notices of Meetings.

ONE TUN, PERKINS RENTS, WESTMINSTER.

At the eighteenth annual meeting of this Ragged School the Earl of Shaftesbury presided.

The report stated that the Sunday Schools are open in the afternoon. Nearly 100 children are sometimes admitted, under the care of only five teachers, and the door has to be closed against many who are anxious to enter. Any number of children can be gathered in, but they must be shut out until additional help is obtained. A Bible Class is held for

the elder girls, and a large number of children remain to the Prayer Meetings. On Sunday evening also, at the service held in the Club Room, a goodly number of children assemble, as well as their parents. There is a Library with about 200 volumes, and Mr. Beech kindly distributes two dozen copies monthly of the "Children's Treasury," and a large number of religious periodicals, books, and tickets have been supplied to the children at half-price, to counteract, as far as possible, the impure literature sold in the neighbourhood. The children paid in £9 4s. 8d. to the Clothing Fund. A selected number formed part of the choir at the Crystal Palace at last year's Temperance Fête.

Twelve months since a new effort was commenced in Old Pye Street, which has been very successful. A Youths' Institute was opened for lads between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, who are in work, to save them from loitering in the streets after working hours, surrounded by every temptation to evil. The membership is 4d. per month, paid in advance. Forty lads have paid their subscription. The Institute is open every evening from 6.30 to 9.45. Simple games are allowed until eight o'clock; and the various educational, Bible, Geometry, and Singing Classes, and a Drum and Fife Band, until a quarter to ten. At the first public meeting last December, presided over by Canon Conway, five prizes were given for the best writing from dictation and spelling, three for arithmetic, three for Bible-class, five for geometry, one for singing, four for drum and fife band, and five who had been specially named for general good conduct. At the Mothers' Meeting the attendance is limited to the mothers of the children who attend the One Tun School, or of former scholars in employment or married. They number nearly a hundred, showing that this little friendly meeting is much appreciated. A Penny Bank enables the mothers to save a little for Christmas time, and the Boot and Shoe Club is as popular as ever; the cost of very nearly 400 pairs has been paid at 3d. a week.

KING'S CROSS.

A meeting was recently held in the Cabman's Mission Hall, King's Cross. Mr. S. Morley, M.P., presided. Mr. Dupee said about four years ago the Mission was commenced. The expenses in building the hall amounted to about £1,600, and at present they wanted between £900 and £1,000, exclusive of £50 per annum ground rent, before the Mission would be out of debt. After a cabman had detailed his experience of the working of the Mission, Mr. Morley addressed the meeting. He said that Colonel Henderson stated that the number of conductors and drivers in London was between 16,000 and 17,000. The convictions for drunkenness had steadily gone on decreasing since 1872. The convictions for furious driving had decreased still more considerably. The honesty of the cabmen had certainly increased. In 1869 there were scarcely 2,000 articles found in cabs during the whole year. In the following year there were nearly 60,090 articles returned, which spoke well for the honesty of the cabmen and efficiency of the regulations.

Several of these Christian cabmen are Sunday and Ragged School teachers.

SUNDAY IN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

It is scarcely needful to remind those who have watched Ragged Schools from the outset of their career, that the primary object of the pioneers was not so much to socialise as to bring our home heathen into subjection to the Lord Jesus. In the dreary by-ways of London—amongst rookeries almost too foul or too dangerous for any but Christian heroes to enter—they found tens of thousands of children alien from all that was good, and without any knowledge that God so loved them as to send His Son to redeem them. Fierce in manners, coarse in language, and steeped to the very lips in vice or crime, they not only cried shame on our boasted civilisation, but they formed so many plague-spots which tainted the whole of London. To evangelise, and with it to civilise, such social waifs, was the one object the founders of the Ragged School movement had in view; and happily, though the work is not so accomplished as to render these institutions no longer necessary, facts innumerable testify that the Gospel of Christ can save the vilest of the vile, and so fit them for both worlds.

Without underrating the value of our week-day work, it is obvious that it is on the Lord's Day that the great task of evangelising our wild tribes must be accomplished. It is then that voluntary teachers are at full liberty to enter on this moral crusade; and hence it is that on Sunday they are found earnestly at work, each in his respective department, like a veritable hive of bees. Each teacher so occupies his special sphere of labour, as not to jostle against his co-workers. Like Nehemiah's men, in fact (Neh. iii. 20), each "*earnestly* repairs" the part of the wal adjacent to his "own house;" for he knows that, however feeble his efforts may be, no other teacher, however superior his attainments, can possibly do the work God has devolved on him to perform.

In briefly sketching Sunday in Ragged Schools we would refer to that first and foremost work which really hallows the Lord's Day—namely, that of the Sunday School. The magnitude of this branch of labour may be inferred from the number of children

under our care. With a present average attendance of 25,709, we think it no exaggeration to say that about 30,000 scholars come, more or less, under our eye. The staff of teachers, too—though very far below the requirements—is equally large; for 1,900 volunteers, of whom 183 were formerly scholars, are found at work every Lord's Day. These teachers are connected by membership with every branch of the one Church. However much they may differ on the minor questions of church discipline or of ritual, they are all so united by the love of Christ and perishing souls, that the acutest eye could not distinguish the Episcopalian from the Congregationalist, or those who practise adult baptism from those who baptize infants. Our voluntary workers, then, show that it is possible for persons of different communions to work together for the glory of their common Master; and thus they practically teach that the variety of genuine religious life is far preferable to that unity of spiritual death which characterises Romanism.

One prominent feature in our Sunday Schools is the SENIOR BIBLE CLASS. Of these there are fifty, with an average attendance of twenty-four in each class. They are a most valuable part of our spiritual agencies. Not only do they enable earnest teachers to take the oversight of youth on their entrance into the labour-market, but they serve, through private speaking and correspondence, to foster any germ of spiritual life, and thus to act as a precious link between the Ragged School and the visible Church. There are few, if any, conductors of such classes who cannot point to cases of unmistakable conversion. And when we see large numbers, as we can on any Lord's Day, bending *inwards* to the teacher—true pastor of youth as he is—as he earnestly points heavenwards, we cannot but infer that the Holy Spirit is revealing Christ in all His fulness and all His matchless grace.

This brief glance at our Sunday School work would not be complete without some reference to the CHILDREN'S CHURCH, which does for children what the Ragged Church does for adults. Though it was not till 1872 that this branch of our Sunday work was referred to in the Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, so popular has become this mode of preaching the Gospel to youth, and of familiarising them with the usual forms of public worship, that sixty-four Children's Services are now held in Ragged Schools, with an aggregate of 5,176 little worshippers.

The attendants may be regarded as the very cream of the Sunday School. The bulk attend with a zest which cannot be adequately described. Many, too, show a faith in prayer such as is a tacit reproof to those philosophers who are now saying (Job xxi. 15), "What profit should we have if we *pray* unto God?" Thus not rarely do they say to the conductor, "Father is out of work—will you please ask God to give him work?" or "Billy couldn't come, for he has no shoes—will you ask God to give him a pair?" Nor is this childish faith without a ready response on the part of Him who really *meant* all He said when He intimated, "Ask, and ye *shall* receive, that your joy may be full."

Nor, though Sunday in Ragged Schools is chiefly devoted to children, are adults neglected; but rather their evangelisation forms an increasingly valuable part of our spiritual machinery.

Foremost amongst our agencies for adults is the RAGGED CHURCH. Of these there are fifty, with an average attendance of 5,399. Twenty-seven receive pecuniary and other aid from the "Ragged Church Union." The first of these services for the outcast and the destitute was organised at Field Lane in 1852. The aggregate attendance since that time has nearly reached 400,000—a fact that will tell its importance better than words. Last year alone the attendance was 27,067, or an average of 520 each Lord's Day morning. At these services the attendants are mostly casuals, mendicants, thieves, degraded professionals, and nondescripts of so low a class that further descent in the social scale would be an impossibility. Yet out of these strange flocks have been dug some of the brightest gems which will deck the crown of Jesus at His second advent. In eight of these Ragged Churches the Lord's death is statedly commemorated under proper oversight; two, in fact, are branches of regularly organised churches. A distinguished American, who communed at one of these, stated "that in all his travels he had seen nothing so like the upper-room;" and a lady, struck by their affectionate interest in each other, said "that they seemed to be like one family."

Another part of our Sunday labour among adults is LODGING-HOUSE VISITATION. The teachers of ten Ragged Schools have adopted this branch of Christian labour. Copying the primitive custom, after prayer in the schoolroom, they go out, two and two, on Sunday evenings, to preach the Gospel of the grace of God to those social waifs who live in the lodging-houses for travellers in

the Mint, Whitechapel, etc. In almost every case their visits are welcome, most landlords readily facilitating their visits. Amongst these outcasts have been found ex-clergymen and ministers, lawyers and doctors, all of whom lost their social status through crime or drunkenness. Cases of genuine conversion have well repaid these lodging-house preachers for their onerous labours, for many inmates have, like the high priest Joshua (Zech. iii. 1—5), had their "filthy garments taken away," and been clothed with a "change of raiment"—even that righteousness of Christ which can never be outworn.

Space will only permit us to glance at another Sunday work of our fellow-teachers, namely, OPEN-AIR PREACHING. Not content with indoor labour, many obey the command of our Lord, and carry the Gospel "into the streets and lanes of the city." There are few of these Evangelists who do not attract large and attentive congregations, especially when the singing of Sankey's stirring hymns is led by the elder scholars of the Ragged School. Respectables as well as non-respectables have been thereby led to cast themselves at the foot of the cross, and there found a "quiet resting-place" for the soul."

When we intimate that 90 schools hold prayer-meetings, it will be inferred that Sunday in Ragged Schools begins as it ends, in entire reliance for success on an Arm far stronger than that of flesh.

We trust that this brief glance at Sunday in Ragged Schools will serve to recruit many more well-equipped teachers for this branch of Christian service. Death, ill-health, and removals have sadly thinned our ranks of late, and there is a cry for more teachers by every Ragged School. For if we have at least 30,000 scholars and adults under our oversight every Lord's Day, there are fourfold that number still outside. Happily, our field of labour gives an opportunity of Christian usefulness for persons of all ranks, and of every kind of ability or culture. Indoors or out of doors—whether amongst children or adults—the field we *know* to be ripe for the sickle; and it only requires a sufficient staff of men and women constrained by the love of Christ and energised by the Holy Spirit, to gather in many a rich spiritual sheaf to lay at the Master's feet at the approaching harvest home.

RAGGED SCHOOLS IN ITALY.

We are glad to record that there are several Mission Schools in the capital of Italy. Though these Mission Schools of Rome are not known in every case by the time-honoured appellation of "Ragged," they consist of the identical classes that throng the genuine Ragged Schools of London. Though not perhaps so rough in manners, they are equally coarse in language; and ragged, shoeless, unkempt and dirty, they are copies of the children who manufacture "dirt pies" in the gutters of our rookeries.

These Mission Schools are chiefly attended by the children of Romanists, who, as such, under Jesuit instruction, have only two articles in their creed—namely, belief in the Pope, and trust for salvation in the mother of Jesus. Yet already out of this unpromising material many have been won for Christ, whose lives give every evidence that they have "passed from death unto life."

At first the priests tried to close these Mission Schools by personal violence or threats of eternal punishment. But the hymns, so dear to English children, such as "Shall we gather at the river?" "Safe in the arms of Jesus," have reached many youthful hearts; and not rarely Christian men gather in the Piazza di S. Pietro and sing these beautiful hymns to the listening and reverential masses.

Foremost among those who have advocated these Mission Schools are the illustrious Garibaldi and Signor Mussi, the leader in Parliament of the Italian Liberals. Both in Parliament and elsewhere they have won many supporters to that liberty of conscience which Popery not only hates, but is doing its utmost to crush in all lands.

Our friend, the Rev. W. C. Van Meter, gives the following particulars of his work in Rome among children, a labour which taxes even his great energies to the utmost. He says—"There are enrolled in my five Day Schools 291 children, with a daily average attendance of 170. In the two Night Schools, 116; average, 52. In the three Sunday Schools, 233; average, 124. Thus in my ten Day, Night, and Sunday Schools the whole number enrolled is 600. These sing in their homes the beautiful hymns taught, speak of the things they see and hear, and gain for us access to many whom we could reach in no other way. During the last month of the quarter, the two missionaries, Bible-readers, and tract-distributors, made 968 visits to families, restaurants, and railway trains. They distributed 1,981 Bibles, Testaments, Gospels, and Epistles, and 11,366 tracts. The great question is, What can we do to save the children of Italy? In my schools the Bible is daily read by all who can read, and is explained by the teachers. Ministers and others who visit them are invited to address

the pupils. The best hymns I can obtain are explained and taught in connection with beautiful music, and are sung in their homes. The schools are usually opened and closed by singing and prayer. In short, we try to have *Sunday School every day!*

As Night and Day Schools were needed in connection with evangelical places of worship in Bari, Milan, and Civita Vecchia, I have agreed to pay the salaries of the teachers; and as the teachers must also act as missionaries, Bible and tract-distributors, in the communities in which they labour, I supply them with Bibles, Testaments, Gospels, tracts, etc., for the work. As an illustration, a few days ago I sent to Bari twenty Bibles, twenty-five Testaments, 162 Gospels and Epistles, twenty-five Sunday School Lessons, twelve singing books, twenty-five sheet almanacks for the wall, 1,000 tracts, slates, pencils, copy-books, etc. I am also supporting a Bible and tract-reader and distributor in Modena."

In Rome the Rev. Mr. Wall's congregation numbers from 200 to 300. He has also a Sunday School with forty-five scholars, as well as a Day School of forty, and a Night School of fifty. In addition, Mrs. Wall has twice a-week a Beggars' Meeting, often counting 120. These last have, no doubt, been attracted by the promise of a piece of bread each after the meeting is over, and this may be justified by the fact that there are about 6,000 persons in Rome always without home or shelter. That they come also for the bread of life is certain, since Mrs. Wall has been able to secure the attendance of a goodly number on Sunday, when no bread is given.

From a letter by Mrs. Wall we extract the following instances of spiritual benefit already received by attendance at these beggars' gatherings.

"On Friday the 'Men's Meeting' was held. After singing that beautiful hymn, 'Safe in the arms of Jesus,' and prayer, Mr. Wall spoke, and asked those who felt they had received blessing since they had attended these services, to tell what Christ had done for them.

The first who rose was a very old man. He said: 'Since I came to these meetings, the Lord has provided for my daily wants and given me friends.' The second was a man of fifty, who had been a sacristano for the priests, that is, he had served at the mass, swept the church, rung the bells, etc. He said: 'Since I came here, peace has entered my heart and a change has taken place. Before I used to blaspheme, now I never do. I am convinced of the truth of the Gospel. When I was in the Roman Catholic Church and saw the immoral life of the priests, and was told that to be saved I must go to them, I fell into disbelief of all religion, and felt despair in my soul.'

A very interesting case is that of a young man, who, two or three weeks previously, had, at a similar meeting, testified before all that he had found Christ, and was not ashamed to confess Him. He said he was a short time before in a dreadful state of despondency, without work, food, or home, and was so exasperated that he cursed and swore, and taking the little picture of Jesus on the cross from his bosom, threw it down and stamped on it, feeling such a hatred to One who could be so unjust, as he thought, to allow the rich so much and give the poor nothing. In this state, hoping to get a piece of bread, he came to the meeting. The first thing he heard were these words:—

'Una voce qui nel cuore,
A me parla con amore,' etc.

They touched his heart, repeating them with the others. He learnt the first verse of the hymn, and determined to go to the meetings at night to learn more of 'this same Jesus.' He came, and for some time subsequently hardly ever was the door open but this man came among the first. He has since then found work and comes when at liberty.

The testimony of another was as follows:—'When I was a boy at school, a companion gave me a Bible, but being seen by the master reading it, he snatched it angrily from me. He at once ordered all to their seats, and calling me to the desk, asked me who had given me the book? I said I found it in the road. He would not believe me, and tried with threats and deception to make me confess, but I would not; at last he put me at the bottom of the schoolroom, prohibiting any one to speak to me. The next day he tried again, but to no purpose. He then ordered me to go to confess to a certain priest that he knew. I feared to tell the truth, and determined to remain silent, to prevent bringing my friend into trouble. After this, I was obliged, for a punishment, to remain fifteen days on my knees during the hours of school. This leniency towards me was out of respect to my parents; my penance would have been otherwise much more severe, as I should have been taken before the authorities, who at that time were all under priestly dominion. From that time I hated the priests, who thus tyrannised over the conscience and made lying a necessity. In my heart, although so unworthy, I turned to Christ, asked pardon for my sins, and now I confide in Him.'"

Mrs. Wall adds: "We find it will be quite impossible to hold the meetings in our own room, for as these poor people are in such a very neglected and diseased state, it is desirable to procure a separate room in which to hold them. Will Christian friends, who have so kindly helped in the past, assist in providing a place where these poor Roman beggars can learn of the love of Jesus?"

It is gratifying thus to find that at a period when the Papacy is preparing in this and in all lands for its last great struggle with Christianity and civilisation, Ragged Schools are proclaiming the Gospel of the grace of God within ear-shot of the Vatican. But it is even more satisfactory to find that many beggars of Rome, as well old as young, have not only been civilised but saved. Thus has God been true to His gracious promise (1 Sam. ii. 8), "He raiseth up the poor from the dust, and lifteth up the *beggar* from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory."

CHILDREN IN A DRURY LANE ROOKERY.

It is one of the most marvellous things that crime and all manner of evils in our larger cities manage to shelter secure within the very sound of the leading thoroughfares, along which passes daily a busy stream of industrious life all unsuspecting. Yet that such is the case in a pre-eminent degree in our great "city of extremities" any one can see by turning off the Strand into Drury Lane, and diverging to right or left along any of the narrow dingy streets which here and there lead into such lanes and courts as a stranger might well be afraid to enter.

Descending from an omnibus in a main thoroughfare, in front of a stately church [St. Mary's], we turn up sharp by the side of it, and, crossing over, find ourselves, in a few minutes, at the place of which we are in search. It is a long street, rather narrow, and the air is fœtid with odours of stale fish and of other doubtful commodities. The shops are not immaculate in the matter of broken windows; the public-houses here, too, occupy the corners, but seem in a large degree to dispense with the gilding and embellishments elsewhere so much sought. Ill-dressed, red-faced women—some of them young—with feet in ragged slippers, and bareheaded, glide about and cast jokes at each other, and children totter along half clad, with the wan, wary look that tells so directly of neglect and premature self-help. Men, dirty and low-browed, lounge about the doors of some of the shops, which have been transformed, as we see, into "lodging-houses" by the easy process of hanging up an old shawl or a piece of dirty canvas over the big window—a process which we notice is also common here with hair-cutters. There are numerous coal and oil shops, we observe, where the smallest quantities are sold. In passing along, new light dawned on us. We notice that what seemed side-doors or private entrances between the shops, dark and dirty, and

so narrow that two persons could hardly have passed each other in them, were, in reality, closes or passages which led down to rows of dilapidated houses, or occasionally into courts that in some instances gave into other courts. Our guide pulled up in front of a side street and said, "Now for it! Keep your weather-eye open, as the sailors say."

We passed down it, then through one of these courts into another, unpaven and ill-drained, and saw that the shutters were closed in nearly all the houses. "Why," I urged, "they seem empty." "By no means," he replied, "they are choke full. People hardly live here, they exist; and actually kill each other, while they steal 'in order to keep in life.' The shutters are closed because the window glass is broken." We passed on to the middle of the row, and at one of the doors he entered. A woman, holding close the breast of her scanty dress, thrust out her head and said, recognising my friend, "Oh, Mr. ——; it's you!" The outer door, I now noticed, had neither lock nor catch of any kind; and a weight was somehow tied by a cord over a pulley, so as to make it close. My companion ascended the stair, and then mounted what was little better than a ladder; and I confess it was not without some fear that I followed him. For a moment, coming from the light, I could not see clearly, though I heard voices. I was in the middle of the place—room it could scarcely be called—ere I could discern the faces. There were some three men, four women, and as many children in it. Two men and a woman were seated at a table with liquor before them, the others were huddled over the fire, one of the elder women smoking. My guide turned round, after wishing them "good day," to a dark corner. It was a few seconds before I discerned that along the wall there were set up one or two truckle beds, precisely as in prison. One I now saw was still spread out on the floor, and on it lay a woman. She had, as I was told after, only come out of gaol a few days before, had been taken in by her old friends, and had never risen again. She had been struck by rheumatic paralysis—the cause, probably, the sudden change from the clean, dry prison to these overcrowded quarters. None of the rest, men or women, seemed to trouble themselves much; and my guide knelt down and discoursed with her, offering to procure her anything she thought she would like, and dropping what words of good counsel he could. But she was not anxious for any aid from outside, and looked, I thought, wistfully at her paramour, who sat drinking, as if to gain from his expression the cue how to act. So, in a few minutes, as little could be done for her, we came away. Several other houses we entered were very much like this one—all overcrowded, and most had children.

In all of them there was sickness in some form or other; "for," said my guide, "if that were not the case, I would not venture to take a stranger into them. Now, there," said he, directing my attention by a nod, "is a house, a thieves' lodging, into which I would not care to go myself much after dark. Men and women huddle together there in the most awful way; fights are not uncommon after a good 'job' has been done, and drink goes freely, for relief seems only to be bought by a debauch. And yet a lady, our clergyman's wife, has found her way there, and spoken a word in season to the women, and in her going out and in has met only with respect from both sexes."

And what of the children born and reared among such conditions as these? Their tender childhood is nothing but a training for crime. The moment they can be made helpful, they are enlisted, and so, verily, are on "the way to prison" from their birth. This is the most touching, the most terrible aspect of the subject. Even mothers who have passed through all the phases of criminal life, from "lending a hand" to "doing a snatch on their own hook," as they would put it, have, when reflection has come to them in prison, implored those who had unsuccessfully tried to aid and to save them to save their children, and by well-calculated schemes have been influential in leading to the recovery of the children from those who were already making use of them in their nefarious callings.

The position of these children merits yet a word more. To take a child from among such influences as those we have described for some hours a day, to attend school, and then to return him again to their midst, looks extremely like imparting to him facilities for becoming a cleverer criminal than he could otherwise have been. School, though unwillingly resorted to, may do much to stimulate the intellect even in such unpromising scholars; but it is the unconscious influence of "home" which gives the moral "bent" for life; and unless some such measure as we have advocated is had recourse to, one effect of the Education Act may be to give us a new type of criminal. We know what prison has done to educate, and to train to trades and habits of industry, the large number often referred to—the one-third that constitute the recommitments—but still to our cost we know that they return to prison. Is there any more likelihood of the children, who have been daily with them and their companions, resisting similar temptations? Scarcely, in our view, inasmuch as they inherit the brand. Some little has been done in the way of several qualifying clauses inserted in various Acts to meet this difficulty; but more definite legislation is demanded, which, as the subject will soon be under consideration, it is to be hoped may be obtained.

The merely shiftless, drunken, and improvident classes, we know, have already made the work of the School Board Visitors difficult, by endeavours to prove their children incorrigible, in order that they might be sent to Reformatories or Industrial Schools, and so taken off their hands for good; but hardly could the criminal class be expected to act in this way; for just at the moment when the chance would open, the children begin to be of use to them in their "calling." And especially would they be so when once able to read and write passably.—Abridged from the *Sunday Magazine*.

RAGGED SCHOOL SUNDAY BREAKFASTS FOR OUTCASTS.

For some time past during the winter months the Ragged Schools in Golden Lane and Sermon Lane have given a substantial breakfast on Sunday mornings to our social waifs. Four others give a lump of bread at the close of the service.

At these breakfasts, which are the result of separate donations, we are glad to find that there is no lack of *voluntary waiters*. For the ladies who thus kindly wait on their fallen brothers and sisters do not forget the lesson implied in the words of their common Friend, Luke xxii. 27, "I am among you as he that *serveth*!"

As might be expected, with the thousands ever on the verge of starvation in this great city, hundreds are attracted solely by the "bread that perisheth" who otherwise would never have heard the Gospel of the grace of God. As the Sunday breakfast is invariably succeeded by short but impressive services, very many have thus been led to "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and been fed with the eternal "bread of life."

Following the example of these Ragged Schools, our friends at Manchester have recently commenced a Sunday morning breakfast for outcasts, only instead of a schoolroom a large tent is employed for that purpose.

One Sunday afternoon Dr. Ziemann, assisted by his band of young men, opened the tent, which was speedily filled to overflowing. In the evening of the same day it was literally packed with hearers. Hundreds upon hundreds could not gain admittance, and were addressed outside by young men. Dr. Ziemann spoke in the afternoon on the words, "Whom seek ye?" (John xviii. 4), and in the evening on "What is thy name?" (Gen. xxxii. 27).

Labouring in the same district as a medical missionary, he is well acquainted with the homes and lives of his hearers, and knows how to

speak plainly to them. There were men without jackets, women without bonnets, the poorest and most destitute class that linger about our streets. The power of God moved that day in the tent. Large numbers remained for the inquirers' meeting, and the place thus received its highest consecration, for souls were saved there.

Services continued to be held during the succeeding week, and, on each evening, large crowds had to be addressed outside, while in the tent, often up to a late hour, great numbers remained, deeply anxious, and seeking the Saviour, who was freely preached to them. One evening the inquirers' room was so full that private conversation was out of the question, and when Dr. Ziemann asked those who were really anxious, and would like to see him in a private house, to rise, over FIFTY—men and women—arose, and thus testified their earnest desire to be on the Lord's side. Dr. Ziemann asked the Christians to praise the Lord especially for the fact that he had never seen meetings so well attended by *men*. Here were hundreds of men night after night sitting eagerly listening to the Gospel, just such men as we are accustomed to see filling the public-houses.

Sunday, the 11th July, was a day of special blessing. The work in the tent commenced at six o'clock in the morning. About thirty Christian ladies, some of whom came from the wealthiest houses, gathered at this early hour to prepare a breakfast for 300 criminals and outcasts. Dr. Ziemann read to the workers the 149th Psalm. He said the ladies should not think they had done a hard duty in coming at such an early hour to serve criminals with breakfast. They had come there "to bind the kings and the nobles" of the Spirit of Wickedness "with chains." "This honour have all His saints." He wanted them to work this day under a sense of being the most privileged ladies in Manchester.

And surely there was a spirit of happiness resting upon God's people in that tent! Though busy from early morning until a late hour, every worker confessed they had scarcely ever spent a happier day. The breakfast commenced at eight o'clock. Tables were neatly laid, provisions richly provided, and nothing could be more striking than the picture of those 300 men, with their countenances mostly marred and ravaged by sin, and those young ladies, with their happy faces, all full of kindness and tenderness, serving those poor outcasts, and dropping here and there a word of sympathy. Dr. Ziemann had contrived to get the names and addresses of returned convicts and prisoners, of whom 186 were present—the others were gathered from low lodging-houses.

After breakfast, Dr. Ziemann said a few words to them, when they heard of grace that can save to the uttermost; and they listened

with marked attention. Nearly thirty remained for private conversation, amongst whom was the son of a clergyman, who said that he had long ago given up the thought that he could be restored; but that morning gave him new courage. All were greatly taken by the kindness shown to them by the Christians in the tent.

For a few employment has been found; others are looked after by the young men. So fruits have been seen, and who knows what still shall be gathered, through this and the London Ragged School breakfast for outcasts?

In Memoriam.

Mr. HENRY COARD.

Mr. H. Coard was the much respected treasurer of the Buross Street Ragged School. In addition to which he was five years the superintendent of the Sunday School. He was admired alike by the teachers and scholars, a proof of which was painfully displayed on Sunday, September 12, when the school for the first time was informed of his death; the scholars were so affected that for a time it appeared impossible to continue teaching.

Our deceased friend, who was only thirty-two years of age, joined the Committee eight years ago, and from the first took a great interest in all its details, originating and carrying out Penny Readings for the poorer classes, which resulted in great good being accomplished, as well as adding a slight increase to the funds of the school. Some time after he was invited by the Committee and teachers to undertake the superintendence of the Sunday School, a position he consented to accept, and held the same up to the time of his death, which occurred on Friday, 10th September, after an illness of eleven weeks.

As a private gentleman Mr. Coard was loved by all; but it was chiefly in his capacity of superintendent that he displayed those amiable qualities which made him so peculiarly fitted for the post he had undertaken. Sympathising, genial, and affectionate, he was a great favourite among the poor children, in whom he took so great an interest; always a smile for them, but never a frown. His services as a public speaker were highly appreciated; quiet, gentle, and unobtrusive, his addresses were yet most effective; he impressed all with

his earnest faith in Christ, as well as his child-like purity of character.

It is also a fact worthy of note, that but four days before our departed friend was taken ill he was first and foremost playing with the children at their annual excursion to Loughton—a day most unfortunate for the occasion. The pouring rain the greater part of the day, it is feared, contributed in some degree to bring about the illness which, alas! has ended so fatally. Here, again, Mr. Coard most conspicuously showed his interest in the poor little ones, constantly suggesting games, &c., to enable them to experience as little inconvenience as possible by reason of the unfortunate weather; at one time engaging in the sports, and later on, *for the last time*, he could be seen conversing with the representative of the Ragged School Union how best to improve the condition and work of the school—a duty he accepted only at the urgent wish of the late treasurer and all the other friends of the mission. A divine Will has ordained that it should be otherwise, that one so loved and valued should enter the better land, leaving behind a legacy, an example, which, judging from appearances, will leave a lasting impression upon those among whom he laboured, and who most reverently followed his remains to their last resting-place in Bow Cemetery. The service was read by the Rev. Joseph Bardsley, rector of Stepney, after which the children sang an appropriate hymn, which seemed to add to the solemnity of the occasion, one of the verses being—

"Oh! think of the friends over there,
Who before us the journey have trod—
Of the songs that they breathe on the air
In the home in the palace of God,
Over there, over there."

F.

VISITS TO LODGING-HOUSES FOR TRAVELLERS.

HAVE you ever seen a common lodging-house? If not, it may be as well to explore a little, and ascertain how and where thousands upon thousands pass their lives. Perhaps the Lord may ask some of us Christians by-and-by what we *did* (not said—not gave) about the poor; and in case He should it would be well to have an answer ready.

I could take you into some lodging-houses I know where you would hear little or nothing to shock you; but in others you would soon wish for a very liberal allowance of wool in your ears. In these

last they will utter the most frightful oaths, blasphemy, and imprecations, in the same calm and indifferent tones as ordinary people use in common conversation; and, as usual when they do go to the bad, the women are by far the worst offenders.

A large kitchen underground, where a coke fire burns continually day and night; rough cooking utensils, commonest plates, dishes, and basins, knives and forks, borrowed from lodging-house keeper; all kinds of coarse rough food cooking at once; men, women, and children herding together; bedrooms above empty, except as tenanted by those working by night; men stripped to the waist; shirts washed by themselves hanging on strings in front of the fire; women's garments in company; no privacy, no decency, no purity, no Bible, no Christ.

One is drunk and furious, another drunk and blasphemous, another drunk and sleeping, many more getting drunk. Look at this old man, grey, nay, white-haired where he is not bald: look at his white hands, clean face, clean linen, and all his clothes clean and well kept. He is *never* sober, has not been so for years. He was once a solicitor in good practice, has friends in the country whom he visits occasionally,—especially his brother, a wealthy clergyman of the Church of England, who will liberally supply all his needs. He is coolly, maliciously drunk now; every deadly passion, every corrupt spring, stirred to the depths by drink, by ardent spirit. Stop your ears; his language is so coolly vile, so cynically blasphemous, so desperately wicked as to shock any other than a fiend of the pit. Even the rough men round him shudder, and fetch the superintendent, who indignantly orders him out of the place, declaring he shall not enter again until *I* give permission for him to do so. Many days of banishment follow; till one evening I see him at the court's corner, where he humbly begs leave to re-enter the doors of the only place he knows as home. A few weeks pass away, and he is more drunk, if possible, than ever; he cannot eat at all now, he lives entirely upon spirituous liquors, and the end is not far off. A fresh supply of money from the brother in the country, unlimited quantities of spirits, no rest or cessation day or night, very little bed, nothing to eat, until the money is gone, and that type of perdition—*delirium tremens*—is upon him. Cursing, shrieking, yelling, whimpering, shuddering, the rough men subscribe for a cab, wherein the superintendent conveys him to the workhouse infirmary; there he shrieks and yells himself to death and judgment, and is buried in a pauper's grave. Meanwhile his brother the country clergyman has died also; and when his will is read, it is revealed that the tenant of a pauper's grave was undisputed heir to ten thousand pounds.

On a recent Sunday one of these came to me; her heart had been

touched during the afternoon, and when we were closing she stood before me, having by the hand a bright girl about twelve years of age. "Look here!" she said, "this one is the last of seven; husband dead, children dead, all gone but her and me. I have been thinking this afternoon, and I want her saved from this life. I want to have her stopped from going to 'casuals' and 'refuges,' from hearing what she hears, and seeing what she sees: will you help me, by taking her away from it?"

"Will you give her up to me?" I inquire in return.

"Do you mean altogether, so that I can never see her again?"

"Yes."

Then the bloated face of the lost drunken *mother* became drenched in tears, and she said, "I can't! I can't! how can I do it?" She fell upon her knees, looked into the bright tearless eyes before her, and her whole frame shook like leaves in the autumn wind.

"Take her away then," I said, "I *must* either have her altogether or not at all! how can I do anything with her unless it is so?"

"I see it, I see it," she said, "but, oh! it's hard! it's hard!"

Plainly it *was* hard, but speedily she braced herself to bear it and came with the girl to me. "Take her," she said, "you can do better for her than I can; I will give her up to you." Quietly I put my arms round the girl's neck; as quietly she looked up in my face, and was plainly content to stay with me. The mother saw this, and was punished; there was not one spark of love, not a trace of regret in the child's face at leaving her. She had slain her own child's esteem and love; and as she turned away in unbearable anguish I saw how, without a word or a blow, it lies in the Lord's power to inflict punishment deep and sore.

I have seen and had to bear all this; I have seen much inconceivably worse, that I dare not write, but which exists; and I *will* speak with my pen, whether men will hear or forbear, in the hope that when it is known and prayed over, some good may be done.

The above graphic sketch is abridged from the *British Messenger*. We are glad to report that the Ragged Schools in Fox Court, George Yard, Golden Lane, Harrow Street, and Rufford's Buildings have not overlooked these moral wrecks; but every Lord's Day evening the teachers visit the lodging-houses of their districts, and preach the Gospel of the grace of God to these social waifs. Many a soul sunk in vice and infamy has already been rescued, proving that the Gospel has not lost its ancient power to save and to sanctify even in these "last perilous times."

A JUVENILE HOUSE OF LORDS.

It is by no means a gilded chamber. Neither coronet, nor ermine, nor lawn sleeve, was ever seen within its dingy limits. And yet it is an exclusive place. Some fifty members, no more, are the lawmakers within it; and a right merry, privileged, feasting time they have of it —until they fall into trouble.

Henry Stuck was charged the other day before Sir B. Phillips with begging. He was only *nine* years of age. Yet he had seen much of the world, and was a member of the House of Lords. The police, who are apt to divest vagabondage of its picturesqueness, deposed that Stuck was one of a gang of fifty boys who were in the habit of frequenting a small coffee-house in Lower Thames Street, where a room, called by them "The House of Lords," was kept entirely for their use. In this exclusive chamber their lordships regaled themselves with halfpenny and penny-worths of coffee, and indulged in ribald jests and jeers whenever a member of their chamber was fetched by a parent who was not alive to the dignity of his son's new position. Stuck, when his lordship was not regaling himself with a halfpennyworth of coffee in the House, would deign to sell fusees in the streets; and at night he retired to a thieves' lodging-house.

It may occur to the reader that it is very wrong to permit a House of Lords to exist in Lower Thames Street, while another sits at Westminster; but an inspector who attended before Sir B. Phillips assured the magistrate that the police were powerless to interfere with the landlord. On one occasion when their lordships were found tossing in their chamber, the police took out a summons, but it was *dismissed* (*!*)

So these fifty boys are free to work their apprenticeship to penal servitude unchecked. Thieves' lodging-houses keep their doors open; and coffee-house keepers may have private rooms for pitch-and-toss. After all, the House of Lords was Henry Stuck's club.

It is shocking to hear all the cant that is talked about the progress of social science, and to see sounding names given to proceedings of peripatetic associations of amiable busy bodies, while such elementary items of social reform are passed over year after year, as the suppression of young thieves' haunts, and of the traders who flourish on the wild boys of the streets.—*Lloyd's Newspaper.*

These members of the thieves' "House of Lords" are the very kind of boys Ragged Schools were originally intended to reclaim. But for a work so honourable as this a larger staff of voluntary teachers is required than has at present enlisted in a great moral

crusade which is beyond the grasp of School Boards. Who then will enlist, constrained solely by love of souls? If any of our readers ask where? we reply, Go to the nearest Ragged School and proffer your services both on Sundays and *week nights*. For in this way alone can these juvenile "Houses of Lords" be crushed.

Hints for Teachers.

SIMPLICITY—THOUGHTS AND WORDS.

No slight element in the success of such evangelists as Spurgeon and Moody is the use of plain Saxon words, or that language which is mostly used by the public at large.

No Ragged School teacher can expect to succeed who habitually employs words above the comprehension of the dullest in his class. Once, after hearing a Ragged School teacher use such words as "vestibule," "gregarious," and similar dictionary words, we whispered to him, "Will you ask your class the meaning of those words?" He did so. All was as still as death till a big boy plucked up courage and replied, "Blest if I knows!" No wonder that this teacher reddened with shame when he saw how, by the use of dictionary words, he had missed his mark.

There is, however, another kind of simplicity which is equally needed for a Ragged School teacher to attract, namely, *suitability*. Recently we listened to an elaborate address in one of the pioneer Ragged Schools. It was well prepared, and overflowed with good matter, yet not fifty out of the 500 scholars present listened to it. Why? It was not only delivered in icy tones such as froze the children, but both subject and matter were fitter for an adult meeting than for children, scarcely one thought being within their power of understanding. No wonder, then, that the scholars showed, as only children *can* show, that the teacher had mistaken his vocation.

The following anecdote of a celebrated Scotch minister, who was afterwards eminently used by God in soul-winning, is a case in point:—

The Rev. Dr. Wardlaw at first did not present the truth with that *simplicity* which is essential to any result.

We infer this from the criticism made by a relative after listening to one of his first sermons:—"Ralph," said he, "did you notice that poor woman in the duffle cloak that sat under the pulpit when you were preaching to-day?"

"Yes, sir," said the young preacher.

"Well," was the reply, "remember that people like her have souls as well as their betters, and that a minister's business is to feed the poor and illiterate as well as the rich and educated. Your sermon to-day was a very ingenious and well-composed discourse, and in that respect did you great credit, but there was not a *thought* in it

which the poor old woman in the duffle cloak could understand."

Dr. Wardlaw profited by the hint, and so cultivated directness and simplicity that he became one of the most useful pastors of his day.

Let us never forget that in teaching a class, or in the collective address, our one aim should be not to display our learning or skill, but to lead the children straight to Jesus. To this end we must cultivate simplicity both in thought and words. And we cannot doubt that, whilst the King is being portrayed in all His beauty, the Holy Spirit will use our poor words as so many arrows to pierce the dead conscience, and show it, first, the penalty of sin and then the remedy in the blood of Jesus. Yours, &c.,

Q IN THE CORNER.

Children's Page.

STRANGE TEA-PARTIES.

RAGGED Schools are famous for their tea-parties to parents and scholars in the winter months. They do much to knit both classes to the school, and so promote regular attendance, good behaviour, and affection towards their kind friends. But, above all, they comply with one of the new commandments of our Lord (Luke xiv. 13), "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind."

Very strange are some of these tea-parties. Thus we have drank tea with gipsies at St. James's Road Ragged School; we have sat down with dust-yard women at Church Place, Paddington Green; we have also seen about sixty male and female thieves gathered round the tea-table at the Ragged School in New Tothill Street, Westminster, presided over by a countess who paid the cost and addressed this strange tea-party. In every case the Gospel of the grace of God was declared by good men, whose creed had nothing but Christ in it.

One of the strangest of all tea-parties was that gathered by the late Mr. Samuel Budgett, a wealthy merchant of Bristol. He began his life as a very poor boy—the first step of his fortune, indeed, springing from his finding a cast-off horse-shoe. But he never forgot his humble origin, and did his utmost to lift poor outcasts out of the mire and the gutter.

Now for Mr. Budgett's tea-party.

Returning home one summer Sunday evening from a village where he had been about his Master's work, he saw a number of youths idling in a lane, with every appearance of being persons of the worst habits. He went to them, and, in his own kind way, entered into conversation. He said he wished to see them happy. "You have minds, and I should like to see you improve your minds; you ought to have something to think about, and to employ you usefully." After chatting with them till he gained their attention, he said. "Now, if I were to offer you a good tea, would you like to come and take it?"

"Oh yes, oh yes!" was the reply,

"Then come up to our room to-

morrow evening. We are going to have a little tea-meeting, and you shall have a good tea."

This invitation, which was to a tea-meeting of tract-distributors, was accepted. He paid for tickets for his new friends, who did not fail to attend and do ample justice to the fare provided. He then came up to them and said, "Well, have you had a good tea?"

"Yes, thank you."

"I suppose you know many young men just of your own kind who go about the lanes on a Sunday night like you?"

"Oh yes."

"Do you think, if I were to promise them a good tea, they would come?"

The answer encouraged him to hope for their company on such terms. One hundred tickets were soon after distributed to the worst young men in the neighbourhood, with a promise of a bountiful treat if they came to Mr. Budgett's large room on a certain evening. This gentleman's character was too well known for them not to be aware that he had some religious end in view. But as they did not like missing they feast, they resolved that the moment they had finished the tea they would go away before they could hear anything about religion.

But Mr. Budgett was a match for them. He met their stratagem by one of his own; for his heart yearned for these poor lost sheep, to bring them to the Good Shepherd. Above a hundred of these outcasts assembled on the appointed evening; the room was crowded, and seldom was there so extraordinary a company gathered under a decent roof. In one corner of the apartment especially it seemed as if the ringleaders had fixed themselves. To this point one of Mr. Budgett's sons, who was in the plot, immediately betook himself, made one of the party, and talked familiarly with their chief.

Just as the repast ended, the preconcerted move began to be made; but Mr. Budgett ran up into the desk and said, "I asked you to come here for the purpose of doing something for you—something that will be of use to you. Now, just as a start, I will give among you fifty pounds, and you must make up your minds what you will do with it." They were quite thunderstruck. It is easy to run away from a prayer-meeting, but it is another matter to run away from fifty pounds. Caps were laid down, and some who had got as far as the door turned back. One of Mr. Budgett's sons—he who had identified himself with the strange visitors—called out, "Fifty pounds!—that's something. Why, there are about a hundred of us, and supposing we divide it amongst us, there will be half-a-sovereign a-piece." Another, who was also in the secret, at once rose and objected, saying, it would be foolish to throw away such a sum as fifty pounds in that way; they had better put it to some use that would do them good for a long time to come. This was argued until all seemed to agree with that suggestion.

It was then proposed to found a society, to be called the "Kingswood Young Men's Association." This was carried by vote, and Mr. Budgett was appointed treasurer. A committee was formed, and, in accordance with the tact whereby the whole matter was managed, some of the wild youths, to their great delight, were placed upon it.

Weekly meetings were then arranged for Sunday evenings, after service. This secured Mr. Budgett's object of withdrawing them from their demoralising rambles on Sabbath evenings, and getting them to the house of God.

The result of this happy tea-party was that about sixty of these young young men attended regularly, and were met with on Sunday nights after service for religious instruction, and in the week for secular instruction. The original donation was laid out in a good library; and, year after year, a tea-meeting was given, at which books were given as rewards.

A similar association for young women was afterwards instituted by Mr. Budgett, which was blessed with similar success. These associations cost him annually about fifty pounds; but he had his reward in the improvement of many, and the clear conversion of some.

Correspondence.

CHILD BEGGAR FACTORIES.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Among the many social evils Ragged Schools have to contend with is the begging propensities of too many parents. Nor ought we to be surprised at this when there are regular beggar factories in London and other great cities. Children are hired for the day by professional mendicants, at the rate of 1s. for one, and 1s. 6d. for two, and are thus initiated into the calling in infancy. They are all below the School Board age of five. Taught to whine and cry, and to say that they and their fathers are starving, they become expert liars in childhood, and so, when of riper years, they naturally follow a profession which has proved so profitable.

In the Poor Law Report on Vagrancy there is a striking case in point. In a kind of autobiography, a man who had been convicted of vagrancy no less than fourteen times, states—"I will endeavour to describe some forms of 'lurk' (a slang expression among thieves and mendicants for a fit of loitering) in which I myself have been an actor. I have found that the 'bereavement lurk' is a lucrative one—*i.e.*, the pretended loss of a wife, leaving me with a young and helpless family to support. I practised the following scheme for the first time in Manchester: I obtained three children—two girls and a boy—between the ages of five and ten years, of their parents at a common 'padding-ken' in Charter Street, for 3s., to 'stand pad' with me from seven o'clock until twelve p.m. on a Saturday. I agreed to

give the children plenty to eat before starting, and some pence for themselves when we returned; so, after the children had been well washed and clean pinafores put on them, and had been plentifully regaled with bread and butter and tea, and I had taught them their lesson (which was a very short one), and I had provided a placard to place on each of their breasts, with the word 'Motherless' written in large letters upon it, we sallied forth on our expedition, and took up our position at one of the entrances to Shudehill Market, and there 'stood pad'—*i.e.*, stood with the children by me, and did not speak unless I was spoken to. I had frequently to answer questions as to how long the wife had been dead, &c., but was not otherwise interfered with. In five hours I had more than 30s. given me in silver and copper. I should think I drank at least a shilling's worth of rum during the time. Besides buying some cakes, &c., for the children, and giving them 4d. each for themselves, I had £1 8s. odd for myself."

The action of the School Board has, I am sorry to say, tended to extend the beggar factories. For as children are compelled to go to school up to thirteen years, poor parents lose the earnings of those children who were formerly employed from eleven to thirteen; and as many poor parents are like the father of "Ginx's Baby," overweighted with children, they too readily resort to this or any form of child-labour which helps to keep the family from starving. Grieved we may be at this result, but I do not think that we have any right to complain that they think their children had better beg than starve.

One such child has come under my own notice, who is now in the industrial branch of a Ragged School. She was found in charge of a gin-drinking young woman, called her mother, but the child was supposed, from her manners, to have had respectable parents. From her pleasing manners she readily emptied the pockets of the foolish philanthropists, known by the begging profession as "soft tommies." When spoken to on the sin of begging, she replied, "But you know mother must have money to pay for her night's lodging, and how could she get it if I did not beg for her?" Many another child, as good as this little social waif has proved to be, is now living a life of lying, to end in a life of shame, unless indeed we "come to the rescue."

The only question is this—cannot Ragged Schools contrive to save these poor children? They are mostly too young for Board or Industrial Schools, even if the migratory habits of the parents permitted them to be caught, but they are not too young, and are just the objects for the infants' class of a Ragged School.

A Looker On.

Ragged School Union.

THE Monthly Meetings of the Committee were held on October 4th and 8th, and the Fortnightly Conferences of the Committee with the friends of Ragged Schools were held on October 6th and 20th. The contributions of the month amounted to £60 19s. 8d., and a legacy of £499 6s. 6d.; the payments to £208 14s. 2d.

The grants in aid of teachers' salaries ordered for payment amounted to £114 10s.; other payments to £131 10s. 11d.

Special grants voted and ordered for payment:—Holloway Schools, £15; Buross Street School, £8 18s. 4d.; West Greenwich, £2 10s. for materials; Fox Court, £2 10s. for books, &c.; Nichol Street, £30.

Fresh applications were received from Poplar, Darby Street, Webber Row, Wentworth Street, and Bell Alley.

Facts and Scraps.

FOX COURT, GRAY'S INN LANE.—Amongst the other important agencies of this Ragged School it has a Visiting and Relief Association. Last year the ten volunteers engaged in this mission of mercy paid 700 visits. Money is rarely given, the relief being in the shape of bread, meat, and coals.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.—This Ragged School has commenced a mission to inebriate women and girls. Every day even girls may be seen in a state of intoxication. The female missionary visits at their homes the victims of intemperance, or converses with women and girls addicted to this sin. Her business takes her to the public-house door, to the factory gate, and sometimes to the villa. A wife tells of the drinking habits of her husband, and says, "If he does not give up his sin, business, home, friends, all must go, and we shall be ruined."

SERMON LANE, ISLINGTON.—A harvest thanksgiving service was held in this Ragged School on Tuesday evening, Sept. 28. An appropriate address was given by Mr. G. Kirkham. The singing attracted a large attendance.

GOSPORT.—This Ragged School has pursued its career of mercy, chiefly among the seafaring population, for above seventeen years. In addition to the ordinary free Girls' Day and mixed Sunday Schools, it has a Home for poor boys. For adults it has a seamen's Bethel on shore, and during the past four years a floating Bethel. A good work is also being done among the navvies employed on the dockyard extension works.

DEAF AND DUMB ASSOCIATION.—This society was founded in the year

1841 more for the purpose of teaching trades than for any other object. But it was reconstituted under the auspices of the Lord Ebury, a vice-president of the Ragged School Union, in the year 1854. Not only does the association provide religious and secular instruction to those who have quitted school, but it also visits the deaf and dumb at their homes, and endeavours to provide employment for those who seek it. It assists the sick deaf and dumb, and last, but not least, fourteen religious services are given weekly in eight different parts of London. There are no less than 1,800 deaf and dumb persons resident in London, and for the benefit of these a reading-room has been established in connection with the institution.

COST OF ORDER IN LONDON.—Although London may be considered a law-abiding city, order is not preserved except at heavy outlay. The balance-sheet of the metropolitan police for the year ending 31st March, 1875, shows a total of £1,099,851 under the head of expenditure. Of this, £828,473 was absorbed in paying, clothing, and equipping the force, divided among 9,940 men of all ranks. Taking the entire expense and number of the force, it may be roughly estimated that each unit costs more than £100 per annum.

Notice of Meeting.

BLENHEIM ROAD, HORNSEY RISE.

On Monday, September 27th, the sixth anniversary of this institution took place. The Rev. A. Rowland presided.

Mr. Sale read the report, which stated that in the summer months open-air and other special services had been held. At the Alexandra Park races he attended and gave away 14,000 tracts, which it was hoped had been the means of doing a large amount of good. The Tract Society had been carrying on its good work, and 7,625 tracts have been distributed. A Night School was carried on in the winter months for boys and girls, conducted by three ladies, and it has been continued during the summer with a large amount of success. The Industrial Society has been carried on as usual during the past twelve months; 296 garments had been made and sold; several parcels of left-off clothing had been received by Mr. Holder and distributed. The Mothers' Meeting is continued with success, and with an average attendance of fifteen. The Benevolent Society has been the means of relieving much distress and rendering aid to many deserving families, and the Boot and Shoe Club is still carried on. The Penny Bank commenced in 1870, and has had up to the present time 2,756 accounts opened; 408 accounts have been opened during the year, and the number of depositors now on the books is 548. The total amount received during the year has been £326 17s. 1d.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. C. Brake, A. Hannay, W. J. Holder, A. Roberts, and Messrs. Chitwell, Drew, and C. E. Mudie.

NOTICE TO OUR READERS.

On and after January, 1876, The Ragged School Union Magazine will be issued Quarterly. It will be published on the first days of January, April, July, and October, and will be entitled

THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

FUTURE OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Many educationists, whilst compelled to admit on the platform that Ragged Schools have been a valuable social agency in the past, insinuate that they have done their work, and the sooner they become extinct the better. They professedly base this opinion on the supposition that School Boards were organised to do our special work, and, from the fact that they have the public purse at full command, and thus can perform it, they infer that Ragged Schools have no legitimate future. It is partly due to this that we hear in all quarters of subscribers gradually withdrawing their subscriptions who are well-wishers to Ragged Schools, whilst others are compelled to discontinue their pecuniary aid simply because their income is too limited to permit them to pay a compulsory school-tax and voluntary subscriptions at the same time.

Then, again, others who have given their strength to the work for long years, are so disheartened by mistaken friends or open enemies, that they have all but retired from the work of their lives. It is doubtless ascribable to this cause that nearly every Ragged School is under-manned, so that, whilst in 1871—before the London School Board came into active operation—there were 3,351 voluntary teachers, only 2,614 were reported to the Central Society in 1875.

These painful facts and figures naturally suggest the question,

Is the special work of Ragged Schools so accomplished that they are no longer needed? or, If facts, as sad as they are glaring, show that they have still a work for God and man to perform, what ought to be their main sphere of labour? or, in other words, What is the future of Ragged Schools?

If Board Schools could do their special work, of course the sooner Ragged Schools were closed the better, if for no other reason than for this—that the toil and expense they entail might be spared. But we hesitate not to affirm that Board Schools, with all their costly appliances, cannot possibly do our *special* work. Their province is to teach the "three R's"—reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic; whilst ours is to teach the fourth and most important R, namely, R-eligion, and that to classes so low down in the social scale that they probably would never know that there is a hell to escape and a Christ who can save, were it not for the Ragged School and its kindred agencies.

No one would be more glad than the earnest Ragged School teacher if the classes for whose reclamation our schools were instituted above thirty years ago were extinct. But, unhappily, juvenile vice and crime still riot in our midst, in spite of the police, the reformatory, and the jail. Nor can we wonder, when the tempters of youth are permitted still to sow evil broadcast. Thus the newspapers constantly reveal the fact that the Fagins of Field Lane are still acting as professors in the Thieves' Colleges which the police *permit* to stud the dreary byways of London. Low theatres, and still lower concert-rooms and dancing-saloons, are, through some occult influence, licensed by the magistracy in spite of the protest of householders and the better class of working men. Then, too, Dolly-shops—*alias* unlicensed pawnbrokers'—still take in property from mere children without asking any questions, and in this way initiate juveniles in the art of theft. Thieves' tales and serials circulate by the million, in which crime is depicted in such glowing colours that one can only wonder that any poor boys and girls escape the moral contagion. Foul Rookeries, too, abound everywhere—even flanking the mansions of the opulent—where vice and misery riot, and where Fever or Cholera slay those who are not already self-murdered by vice. And, above all, drunkenness has so increased, notwithstanding all the efforts of temperance advocates, that about half the national revenue is derived from this source. So powerful, indeed, is the drink interest

in this land of Bibles, that it succeeded in returning sixty brewers or distillers to the present Parliament.

But if any optimist should regard this sketch as too darkly coloured, we can only ask him to visit the "slums" of Whitechapel, the Mint, Lisson Grove, and Westminster; nor do we doubt that he will be led to exclaim, "The half was not told to me," of evils which are eating out the national life.

The facts thus faintly indicated point out the future work of Ragged Schools as with a pen of fire. For our schools, if true to their mission, *must* be restricted to the children and adults of the outcast or destitute classes. For the labouring classes, who are higher in the social scale, ample machinery is at command—hence it is amongst the "residuum" alone that we are called so to labour that they may be won for both worlds.

Without, then, ignoring our secular Night Schools—the importance of which cannot be exaggerated *if* confined, as they ought to be, to juvenile roughs and thieves—it will be seen that the future work of Ragged Schools will be mainly social and evangelistic. As we began, so must we continue till complete victory crowns this moral war. If, indeed, we have Penny Banks, Clothing Clubs, and other social agencies, it is solely because our moral waifs have pressing social needs, and because thereby they are stimulated, from a mere sense of gratitude, to attend the Sunday School or the Ragged Church. In this way they not only learn the duties of this life, but are fitted for that which is to come.

All this, mighty as is the work before us, lies in our own power. We have, by steady practical sympathy, won the confidence of the most abandoned; and hence they will listen attentively to us whilst we teach the lower lessons of prudence, or the still higher lesson of gospel grace, when they will hearken to no one else. Thus it only requires an adequate staff of men and women fully consecrated to Christ, to render the Ragged School of the future still more successful than during the past thirty years. We would, then, echo the language of Caleb, and say to all whose zeal for Jesus is not at zero, but who rather have a burning love for souls (Numb. xiii. 30), "Let us go up *at once* and possess the land; for we are well able to overcome it."

Earnestly, then, would we implore all genuine disciples of Jesus who are not already occupied in this, or some kindred field of gospel labour, to proffer their services at once, for to-morrow may be a day too late!

GLASGOW FEEDING DAY SCHOOL.

An Industrial Feeding Day School has just been established in Glasgow. Every Sunday afternoon about 1,200 to 1,500 little ragged children, of both sexes, are gathered into the Drill Hall, near Glasgow Green, and have the gospel simply and affectionately set before them. Each child receives a good piece of bread and a large mugful of soup at the close of the school.

The neglected state of many of these little creatures stirred the hearts of the workers to devise some plan of more effectually helping the most destitute among them. After prayerful deliberation, premises were secured in which to begin a Day Industrial School, capable of accommodating about two hundred children.

The plan adopted is as follows: The children attend from seven in the morning till half-past five or six in the evening continuously, receiving breakfast, dinner, and supper at the school. The rest of the time is divided between school-work, industrial training, and play. They are sent to their own homes at night.

Every care is taken, by visiting each case, that none are admitted whose parents or friends can support them. So numerous are the cases of the really destitute, that, if the funds placed at the committee's disposal would afford it, the school could be filled. At present the attendance averages about a hundred.

Recently an incident occurred which we trust is the beginning of a genuine work of grace among these poor little social waifs.

Seven of the children were standing on a form, for having violated the rule of the tea-table. The school was assembled for evening worship, previous to dismissal; and on the teacher asking what such conduct deserved, a little voice (that of a fatherless boy, whose mother was in the lock-up for drunkenness) called out, "Let them off!"

"Would you like to see them pardoned?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you willing, then, to take their punishment?"

"No," shaking his head, and smiling.

"Is there a boy or girl present who will take their place?"

"I will," said a blind boy, for whose transference to the Blind Asylum arrangements are in progress. Accordingly he was brought to the front, and, in the presence of all, received the punishment due to the offenders. As he was led back to his place, one after another of those who had been saved by the substitute began to weep, and in turn went up to "Blind Harry," to thank him for what he had done for them. He only said "Oh, I don't mind if it will only bring them to Jesus." Seeing that the incident had produced a deep impression,

and feeling the solemnity of the occasion, the great substitutionary work of Christ was earnestly brought before the children. Nineteen seemed to be seriously impressed. The others were then dismissed, leaving these with their own teacher, who again urged them to accept Jesus as their Saviour *at once*.

One little girl, the child of a Romanist, whose face bespoke intense agony, on being taken aside by the teacher, said, "It's nae for Harry I'm crying. My heart *will burst* for Jesus. My heart's *sair* for Jesus." After a long talk, first with one, and then with another of the teachers, she went home professing to have given herself to Christ. Hearing the sound of sobbing still proceeding from another room, on entering it the senior girl of the school was found there in deep distress. This girl had previously given great trouble and anxiety, and was considered the worst girl in the school. In fact, it had been decided that, if her mother, who was not a good character, could be induced to sign the paper agreeing to her being placed in a girls' Reformatory, she should be transferred thither, lest she should contaminate the other children. But now the hand of God was upon her. Again and again the moan burst from her heart as she was being spoken to, "I have been such an awful sinner." But before she left light broke in upon her soul, and she went home saying with quiet confidence, "I'm Christ's now. My sins are all forgiven." Since then the change in this girl is something marvellous. She has become gentle and tractable, and each evening she comes to the teacher and asks prayer and counsel before going home. One thing which she said to the teacher may be a hint worth taking by those who have to deal with similar cases, "Oh, Mr. H——," she said, "when I do anything wrong, *don't scold me*, but pray for me."

Will our readers remember this school in prayer, asking that the "Good Shepherd," who passed by the "ninety and nine" and went after that which was lost until he found it, may have his eye on these neglected lambs, and bring them into his blessed fold.

RAGGED SCHOOL CLOTHING CLUBS.

In connection with the Ragged Schools affiliated to the Central Society there are 56 Clothing Clubs. Of these, 19 are confined to scholars, and 10 to adults—chiefly parents or members of our Mothers' Meetings. To show their value as teachers of thrift and neatness, it may be intimated that the sums paid last year to 46 of these clubs amounted to £874 5s. 1d., or an average of £19 each. This sum may be regarded as so much money saved from the gin-

palace on the part of the adults, and from the Sunday fruiterers and sweetstuff-shops on the part of the children.

At most of our Clothing Clubs a bonus of twopence in the shilling is paid on all sums which remain in the hands of the managers at Christmas. But in other cases no interest is added, the sole benefit derived being this—that the material bought at wholesale price is retailed to the contributor at the same price. This is no slight boon to a poor woman with several children, with probably a sickly husband, especially as in many cases linendrapers kindly sell material at a reduced price to the managers of Ragged School Clothing Clubs.

As might be expected, they are very popular in their several districts. Many, indeed, were started at the wish of parents or scholars, who, as they proverbially say, find "money burns a hole in their pockets"—in other words, the habit of spending to-day what can be done without till to-morrow is so ingrained in them that they need some external influence to overcome their unthriftiness. In addition to this, many scholars are warmly clad from this source in the winter months, who otherwise would be exposed to all the rigours of an English winter. Nor is this the only benefit, for the materials made up at our 70 Mothers' Meetings, and by the 2,324 girls who "ply needle and thread" in our 54 Industrial Classes, are usually paid for out of the funds deposited in the Clothing Club. For it is the general rule that the materials purchased shall be made up in the Ragged School.

A writer in the *Christian World* gives the following sketch of the working of parochial Clothing Clubs:—

"Lately opportunities of seeing the working of these valuable institutions have been given, and it is proved to us beyond a doubt that if the friends, mostly ladies, who organised them did nothing else, they would have accomplished a vast amount of good. All the year round these secretaries, or managers, or whatever they may be called, go to a schoolroom once a week, and collect the pence which the women pay. Sometimes, indeed, they take even more trouble than this, for they call at the homes of the people for the money. It is then kept in safe custody and something is added to it. Generally the amount of help which is given depends upon the money which the women themselves contribute. Once a year, generally about Christmas, they receive their tickets and go to the shops for their goods. They do not have their money returned to them, but take a warrant signed by the lady collector, which asks the tradesman to supply the bearer with goods to the amount of a few shillings. The day of the distribution of these tickets is a very busy one. Generally the women

go at once to the shop, or if they cannot do that, they go as quickly as possible. They are allowed in most cases to go where they please and purchase what they like, but in some instances they are compelled to go to certain shops, and are not allowed to buy millinery or dresses.

An hour may well be spent at a favourite draper's, when the women, as they themselves express it, 'Go a clubbing.' The shop is crowded, there is scarcely standing-room at the counter, and all hands are as busy as bees. The assistants know when the season is coming round that all their strength will be taxed; and the proprietors are careful to have no vacancies, and to have plenty of good plain things in stock. 'Nobody,' said a member of a firm that supplies every year four or five hundred pounds' worth of goods to Clothing Clubs—'nobody knows better than these working women what a good piece of calico is, and what it ought to cost.' They look like it. They examine well the goods which are shown them, and many of them know exactly how far the club ticket will go. For the most part they buy things that are needed in the house. First of all a pair of blankets, and even the baby's eyes sparkle as these are brought forward. Then some unbleached sheetings, enough to make a pair of sheets for the bed of the father and mother and a pair for the children's cot. Then some calico, also strong and unbleached, for underclothing. Next a pair or two of warm stockings for the father, and some scarlet socks for the little ones.

'And that will be about as far as the ticket will run to, I suppose, miss?'

'No, you can have another article.'

'Then,' and the woman's face brightens, 'I will have a little bit of carpet for my bedroom, if it is only just a yard to put down by the side of my bed, for I have wonderful cold feet, miss.' The carpet is brought and measured, and then the bill is made out, and the parcel packed up. Sometimes the things that seem to be most needed are winter frocks. Sometimes, too, a piece of black cloth for a jacket, or a warm woollen shawl, is chosen. Whatever it is, the purchasers are so delighted that their faces make one feel merry even in December. 'I do feel thankful, miss. The parcel comes just like a gift, you see; for I have not missed the money every week, and now it is worth more than I can tell you.' So said one woman, and she only expressed the feeling of many more."

We cannot conceive of any plan more calculated to aid deserving but poor parents than our Clothing Clubs. The fact that even when a bonus is given, the members contribute five-sixths of the money spent, serves to engender self-respect, and to check the growth of that pauper spirit which has done so much to degrade the lower classes of Great Britain.

TEXT POSTERS' MISSION.

Among the many plans recently adopted by the managers of Ragged Schools to teach adults who are still outside our mission churches, one of the most valuable is that designated the "Text Posters' Mission." This association commenced its useful work in 1873 with speedy success. There are now 46 stations—chiefly in the leading thoroughfares of the Far East—where Bible texts are posted.

The Text Posters' Mission is thus described by one of its earliest promoters, Mr. F. W. Charrington:—

"Advantage has been taken of a piece of blank wall, on which, first of all, have been posted a row of illustrated wall papers, placed at a convenient height for persons to read. Above and below this are posted large texts of Scripture, interspersed with advertisements of Christian literature, with which may be placed notices of forthcoming meetings. About these stations may often be seen numbers of people eagerly reading the Words of Life. On the Sunday morning, working men, out for their weekly stroll, stop to read the parable of the 'Prodigal Son,' or the story of 'The Patch-work Quilt.' In the dead of the night the poor 'fallen one,' as she passes along, is startled to see some familiar text learned as a child in the Sunday School; and the policeman, who walks along his solitary beat, turns his bull's-eye lantern, and, whilst all is hushed around him, he reads the story of a Saviour's Love; and the profligate, as he returns from some scene of revelry, is arrested for the moment as he reads those solemn words, 'Prepare to meet thy God.'

The results have been, that large numbers of people have been brought to hear the gospel, it being remarkable on looking over the list of those professing to have been brought to a knowledge of the truth, how many are living opposite or within sight of the Advertising Stations. It is hoped that this work will be taken up by, and be useful to, Christians working in the different parts of the Lord's vineyard."

This method of evangelising our home heathen is not, we are glad to report, confined to London, but is successfully carried out at Kingston. A working man, full of love for souls, devotes all his time to posting texts on walls, &c. So much are his labours appreciated that several sites have been placed at his disposal rent free.

Our friend Mr. George Holland gives in the *Christian Advertiser* the following cases of usefulness which came under his notice at the Text Posting Station which he has opened in connection with George Yard Ragged School:—

"A man soon covered a wall 40ft. long with texts and wall

papers, placing here and there a printed notice announcing meetings. In the afternoon, as the poor children left the Ragged School, boys and girls crowded around the different papers and read them. The news was soon carried home; in a few minutes more than thirty persons, all grown-up people, stood reading the wall papers and texts, the latter in a loud voice, and thus many unreading, thoughtless ones heard God's Word. Who shall say what that Word may accomplish, by the Holy Spirit's blessing, even ending in the salvation of precious souls!

'That's true,' said a man the worse for drink. 'What is?' said I. 'Why, no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven—I shan't go there.' He walked on and then returned, reading once more the text. The next day he called, saying, 'I wish you would take that down; it haunts me wherever I go.' What if it ends in making him a sober man, and awakens in him—by the aid of the Holy Spirit—concern about his soul, causing him to inquire, 'What must I do to be saved?' What if it shall end in his salvation!'

A poor mother came asking, 'If you please, sir, will you get me "Bob, the Cabin Boy;" I have a boy at sea, I should like to have that picture so very much?'

Two dustmen stopped; one said, 'Please, sir, let us have ourselves—us two—that's outside.' They were supplied with the wall paper 'Dust Ho.' There is scarcely a child in the neighbourhood but who has learned off by heart the texts on the wall, such as 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.'"

One effect has been to create a desire in the people for a wall paper or two for their own rooms. Should not this plan of gospelising the heathen of London be adopted throughout its length and breadth? There are walls and building hoards used for advertising in all parts of London. If no other benefit accrued, we should in this way at least *practically protest* against and most probably neutralise the poison of those "sensational" engravings which now greet our scholars everywhere. When we see illustrations of burglars and highwaymen at work, posted in all directions, it ought to excite wonder that so many of our scholars escape the moral contagion, for in too many cases these pictures operate as the first lessons in the art of crime.

We then cordially recommend the consideration of this plan of Christian usefulness to Ragged School teachers, as they are ever ready to adopt any plan which aims to socialise and to save our social waifs.

A RAGGED SCHOOL MODEL LODGING-HOUSE.

THE *Advertiser* notes that "Mr. William Gilbert has been writing in *Good Words* on the Peabody Fund and its administration. The laundry at the top of each house, the coal-cupboards and the bath-rooms, and many of the rules by which the tenants are controlled, are most useful and salutary. We admit, too, the financial success of the undertaking; we do not question Mr. Gilbert's accuracy at all when he tells us that the £500,000 left in the trustees' hands has increased to £580,000, or by some 16 per cent. But when he proceeds on this account to praise the combination of philanthropy and common-sense which have characterised their administration of our American benefactor's unprecedented kindness, we can no longer agree with him. We consider that the Peabody trustees have totally misunderstood their business. They were not expected to accumulate sixteen per cent. on their capital by the letting of their model dwellings to safe and comparatively well-to-do tenants.

Mr. Gilbert speaks approvingly of the tact which has led them to build their blocks as near the heart of London as possible, in order to provide house-room for the thousands evicted for such metropolitan improvements as the making of Victoria Street, the new Law Courts, and so on. But we cannot admit that the Peabody buildings have taken in the poor wretches who used to swarm in the rookeries of Westminster and the blind alleys clustering in the neighbourhood of Temple Bar; nor do they avail at all to give shelter to the scores that have been lately evicted at Shoreditch. Let the very poor have at least one block set apart for them. Let the rule about character be abrogated; let, in fact, a helping hand be given to those who are down in the mire of poverty and distress."

The mistake connected with most model lodging-houses, namely, that the high rentals necessarily restrict them to well-paid artisans, to the exclusion of casual labourers, dock porters, and hawkers, who proverbially "live from hand to mouth," has been obviated by the managers of the Ragged School known as the One Tun, Westminster —the scheme owing its initiation and successful working to the indefatigable labours of Mr. Barker Harrison. For in "Westminster Buildings," Old Pye Street, the rents are so low that the occupants can have *two* comfortable rooms for less than they often pay for one miserable one! There are fireplaces in every room, to which arrangement, by the divine blessing, may be attributed the good sanitary state of the building.

Westminster Building was erected in 1866. The average number of inmates occupying the 61 tenements has been 226. During nine

years only 13 adults have died, and several of these from asthma or consumption contracted before entering the building.

The building, which accommodates *sixty-one* families, was built by Mr. Brass, of Chelsea, under the superintendence of Mr. H. M. Eyton, architect, Strand, and was opened July, 1866. The cost of the ground, which is freehold, and the entire building—including the Youth's Institute Reading Room—was £9,085 1s. 6d. Towards this there has been received £1,355 5s. compensation for the club building in Duck Lane, from the Westminster Improvement Commissioners; £7,500 loan on mortgage, at 3 per cent., from the late Marquis of Westminster, and a generous donation from his lordship for the Bill of Extras, making a total received of £9,088 14s. 5d.

The rents range from 1s. 9d. a week for a comfortable room, with lock-up closet and coal-cupboard, and a cottage range, with oven and boiler to it, to 3s. for two rooms. Water is laid on on every landing; and the washhouse at the top of the building enables the poor women to wash and dry their clothes away from their rooms. Low as are the rents, they are sufficient to defray the working expenses of the dwelling-house, the superintendent's wages, poor, general, gas, and water rates, all the incidental repairs, and 3 per cent. on the money borrowed on mortgage.

Having often visited Westminster Buildings Model Lodging House, we gladly bear our testimony to the social benefit which has accrued to a very low and depraved district through their erection. Though occupied by a class so much lower in the social scale than the tenants of the Peabody and other model lodging-houses, they are equally remarkable for the healthy condition of the inmates, and their improvement in morals and manners. The rent, too, is rarely, if ever, in arrear; and all vie in keeping their apartments neat and clean. Surely results like these amply repay all the anxiety and toil the scheme has entailed; and it shows *what common sense can achieve when wedded to perseverance*, in socially elevating the poorest class.

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S EMIGRATION HOMES.

About two years ago two Children's Emigration Homes were opened in Birmingham by Mr. T. Middlemore. The one for boys is situate in Beatrice Crescent, and that for girls in Spring Street. Children of the street-arab class are alone received into these Homes. Their principal haunts are the "Inkleys," the "Gullet," and other localities similarly notorious for crime, vice, and misery.

The projector of the movement found from long experience that

unless the bulk of these poor neglected ones were entirely removed far away from their early associates they were liable—even after long separate training—to revert to their old careers, and so to add to that juvenile crime which appals every thinking man.

After a preliminary training in the Birmingham Homes the children are taken to Canada to be settled in Christian families there. The younger are usually adopted, and the elder are settled on farms, where they eat at the same table and work in the same field as the farmer does himself. They have thus the great benefit of family life and of respectable companionship in the country of their adoption. During the past two years eighty children have been taken to Canada and placed in Christian homes there, and upwards of a hundred and ninety children have been received and trained in the Birmingham Homes.

A Home for a hundred boys has been built in Birmingham. A Reception and Distributing Home has been established at Ontario. A committee has also wisely been formed to superintend the work in Canada.

One fact will show the importance of this social mission, namely, that a larger number of children pass annually through these Emigration Homes than through all the Industrial Schools of Birmingham and its immediate district. Thus in the year 1873 seventy children were committed to Industrial Schools by the Borough magistrates, whilst in the present year upwards of eighty outcast children were taken to Canada from the two Homes. It should be borne in mind that these children are taken into the Homes solely because it is found that an honourable career is closed to them in Birmingham; that they belong to a class more abandoned than those who are committed to Industrial Schools; and that almost all of them are *inadmissible* to these institutions on account of their age or of other circumstances.

Of course the promoters of these Homes have had failures as marked as their successes—for what work for God is without its failures? Mr. Middlemore supplies the following cases of failure, and of the fatal results which followed in the sequel:—"Our failures in England consist in the *first place* of eight of the older boys who became weary of the Home and ran away from it. Of these, two are now in prison for larceny, one for burglary, and another for manslaughter. Two of the remaining four committed criminal acts after leaving the Home, but have succeeded in eluding the police. Our failures in the *second place* consist of a few little children whose parents took them away before signing the agreement which gives the Managers of the Home control over them. Most of these poor children have already come to ruin. For example, a woman from the Inkleys lately removed her

two little girls from the Spring Street Home. She took them back to her own pestilent and vicious quarters. The younger girl died of cholera, and the elder has fallen so low that the kindest wish we can have for her is that God would lay her by her little sister's side."

Two cases lately dealt with will indicate the staple of the material admitted into the Birmingham Emigration Homes.

Mary ——, aged four, was received into the Spring Street Home in 1873. Her mother is a poor outcast woman living in the Gullet, who had just left prison when her daughter was taken into the Home. She was taken to Canada in May, 1874. Poor little Mary was born and nurtured amid all that was loathsome and vicious. No fiction has ever contained a tragedy more horrible or release more divine than is shown in the history of this little Birmingham outcast. On her arrival at Quebec she was taken ill, and her illness becoming serious, she was left at Montreal, in the care of Professor Dawson, who most kindly placed her in a hospital, and, on her recovery, took her into his own house. A Christian lady of good social position, whose own daughter had lately died, offered to adopt little Mary. She wrote as follows:—"I feel such a void in my heart since the death of a dear child two years ago. She died so happy in the Lord. If God would give me another in my charge, he helping me, I would raise her for himself." This application was favourably considered, and now this helpless Birmingham outcast is the adopted daughter of a lady who is training her for Christ.

Benjamin ——, aged six, was admitted to the Boys' Home in 1873. He is the son of a poor outcast woman also living in the Gullet. The mother, who is frequently in prison, was intoxicated when her little boy was sent for. "Take him away from me," she said "he has no chance with me." Benjamin was taken to Canada last May, and settled in a happy Christian home there. His adopting father writes thus of him:—"I write to you a few lines to let you know that our boy Benjamin is well, and a very good boy, and that we have grown very fond of him. He often speaks of you, but he says that he would rather be here than in England. He is going to school regularly, and by the time he sees you again I hope he will be able to show you that he has been learning very well."

As it is not the will of our Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish, he has doubtless raised up the Children's Emigration Homes as one means of saving them. Our prayer is that he may continue this, his own work, when the instruments of the moment have been withdrawn from it for ever.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

On paying a visit to a densely populated manufacturing parish, where the best years of my life had been spent in the service of the Gospel, I was called upon, the day after my arrival at the parsonage, by a Christian friend. He knew I should be anxious to hear of old teachers and old scholars, and of the state of those whom I had been brought into more prominent connection with, either for their piety or their ungodliness.

Turning from these cases, I asked eagerly, as the thought struck me, "Is poor R—— living yet?" This man had been known to me for years chiefly through his children, who were Sunday scholars in my school, and the eldest of whom, with her heartbroken mother, sometimes stole of an evening to my house to open their grief to me, and to receive such comfort as pity could offer.

R—— was a confirmed drunkard! one of the most hopeless class! a systematic drunkard at middle life. For many years he had been intoxicated every night, and yet such was the hardihood of his constitution, that he had, during the whole of those years, scarcely lost a single day's work! His conduct at home, on his return late at night —generally in the early morning—and on Sundays, was often violent and ferocious in the extreme. A little before my leaving the place he had received a small legacy left by a relation, and I naturally concluded that, as his means of self-destruction were augmented, he would speedily add to the thousands who every year lie down at mid-life in a drunkard's grave. And so it was natural that when I remembered the man I should ask eagerly, "Is poor R—— living?"

"Why, he is one of our Sunday School teachers," was his answer, as eagerly spoken as my question. "I saw him last Sunday, and as he had heard you were coming here, he commissioned me with a message for you."

"A Sunday School teacher!" I exclaimed. "What! R——, the drunkard?—never! And what is his message to me? for, at work by day, and drunk by night, I never saw his face, much as we were interested in him and his wife and children."

"His message is, that although he never could be got to come and hear you while you were here, yet that the words which his children sometimes brought away from the Sunday afternoon addresses, and repeated and talked about at home, sunk into his mind, and he will have to thank you to all eternity! He is converted to God, I trust," continued my friend, "and by the ministry at your old church too."

"How was it," I asked in wonder and amazement, "that he never would come to church in my time here?"

"Why, he was ashamed; he had received so many messages, and knew you knew all about him; and so, though his mind was at work, he could not overcome his pride and shame. As soon as ever you had gone he came; the Word of God fastened on him, and now, whenever the hinge of the church-door turns, R—— goes in; and he has been one of our most regular Sunday School teachers for some time past."

Hints for Teachers.

CONVERSATIONAL MEETINGS FOR SCHOLARS.

THE "Children's Special Mission" have adopted an admirable plan for deepening religious impressions which has been so blessed that I would recommend it to my fellow-labourers in Ragged Schools.

It is customary after most of their services for the conductors to invite the elder scholars to remain for a "Conversational Meeting," which lasts about twenty minutes.

This After-Meeting is found to be a most valuable agency for bringing together earnest teachers and not less earnest scholars, and thus affording an opportunity for personal converse with any who may be impressed.

"I am so glad you came and spoke to me after the meeting," said one, "for if you had not, I might have remained in darkness many years longer."

The Conversational Meeting also very often becomes a kind of recruiting class for new teachers. There are many who shrink from preparing a lesson three quarters of an hour long, who do not fear a ten minutes' conversation with a group of little ones.

But for such a class it is not a *lesson* that is wanted. It is well to take some text, or Scripture truth—something, perhaps, that has been mentioned during the service—and with a few loving and earnest words to apply it to the hearts and consciences of the children.

To *pray with* them also is most important, for thus can we best lead them to the Saviour.

At one of these special services held at Surrey Chapel, I found that 80 out of 250 scholars remained for the "Conversational Meeting," and at another which I attended at Worthing, above a moiety of the 200 children stayed for such private conversation. At Amicable Row Ragged School it has been the practice for some years to hold a meeting for prayer and private speaking at the close of the Sunday Night School. I have seen above eighty present, all manifesting much anxiety about their souls.

Here it may be suggested that the scholars so gathered should be divided into classes, and placed if possible under the care of their *own* teacher, who in this way will become a real pastor to the young. A wide space should separate class from class, so that the more timid scholars may not be afraid to tell out their own experience.

The serious aspect of the bulk of the scholars seen at such meetings—that blending of hope and fear which tells of the intensity and reality of their emotions—speaks unmistakably that, guided by the Holy Spirit, the arrow of the Word has reached the conscience.

I am, &c.,

QUARTUS.

BIBLE RULES FOR TEACHERS' PRAYER MEETINGS.

MR. EDITOR,—It is pleasing to find from the last report of the Ragged School Union that ninety Ragged Schools statedly hold Prayer Meetings, with an average attendance of nearly 3,000. For it shows that the teachers do not depend upon an arm of flesh for success in their difficult work.

But in many Teachers' Prayer Meetings—loth as I am to criticise prayer—I have noticed some glaring defects, which will be best indicated by the following Bible hints on united prayer for Ragged Schools :—

1. Be brief. Eccles. v. 2; Matt. vi. 7.

2. Be *definite*. Acts xii. 5.

3. Remember that yours is *not the only* Ragged School. Ph. ii. 4.

4. Do not forget that you meet solely for prayer for Ragged Schools, and not to pray for Jewish or Gentile missions. See 2 Kings xix. 14.

5. Give other teachers an opportunity to pray. 1 Cor. xiv. 29-31.

6. Wrestle for the conversion of *all* the scholars. Gen. xvii. 18; Matt. xviii. 14.

7. Supplicate for more teachers. Luke x. 2.

8. Pray not icily but fervently. Jas. v. 17, 18.

9. Base every petition solely on the name and work of Jesus. John xvi. 24.

10. *Expect* a direct answer. Contrast Job xxi. 15, and Heb. ii. 6.

With prayer like this, we shall doubtless find that our Lord meant all He said when he declared (Matt. xviii. 19), "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching *anything* they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven."

Yours, &c.,

MNASON.

Children's Page.

THE SHOEBLACK'S DINNER.

WE have often noticed in these pages how kind and considerate the Ragged School Shoeblacks are to each other. Thus they have often contributed out of their hard earnings towards the funeral of brother shoeblacks. Others, too, have clubbed together to help their comrades during sickness. This was done right heartily, as if it were a great privilege, and not a tax. And why? They remembered who said (Acts xx. 35), "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

But though charity should begin at home, it ought not to end there. Their benevolence is not confined to their brother shoeblacks, as the following incident—one out of many—will show.

A short time ago I was passing

along a busy street as two of the Shoeblack Brigade were at dinner. With cold stones for their table, and a couple of thick slices of bread and meat to each, they seemed quite happy, and ate with a hearty relish that it did me good to see. When about half done, one of them made a sudden stop. Whispering a few words to the other, he gathered up the remaining half of their dinners, ran after an old beggar, gave it him, and then, with a happy face, made the street echo his cheerful cry, "Clean your boots, sir."

Yet, grateful as was the old beggar, do you not think that these two shoeblacks were still happier? For when did kindness to others not kindle a glow in one's own heart?

S. A.

HOW JESUS WAS FOUND.

In connection with the Ragged School in Bell Alley, Goswell Road, a Children's Prayer Meeting is held three times weekly. The room in which it is held is always thronged with scholars who know that prayer in Christ's name is God's key to unlock the gates of glory. Some children have been led thereby to give their hearts to Jesus, that he might take care of them.

This child Prayer Meeting has done good to some much older in years, but who needed Christ's love quite as much as the members of this youthful praying band. Thus, one Sunday evening, a young man came to the Children's Prayer Meeting and took a seat at the back. After several had prayed, the superintendent went and spoke to the stranger, when he said, "Don't you know me, sir? I used to attend here; and it was through hearing one of the boys pray first led me to pray."

The superintendent said to him, "Will you stand up and tell us about it?"

He did so, and said:—

"Dear boys and girls, I am asked to tell you how I found the Saviour. Four years ago I used to attend these meetings, and it was through hearing a little boy pray that struck conviction to my heart. I then said to myself, 'If that little boy can pray like that, why should not I pray?' But I did not pray in your meeting; but when I got home I fell upon my knees and cried to Jesus to save me. He heard my prayer; and from that time I have known the dear Saviour—about four years—and now I am a Sunday School teacher, and I am trying to lead other little boys to Jesus."

BEST OF CHARACTERS.

W. B. for some time had attended Field Lane Ragged School. He worked at home with his father, who was a glass silverer. But as his father, a sober industrious man, could not obtain any work for some time, extreme poverty at length sent them both into the workhouse.

Let out of the workhouse one day to seek employment, W. B. passed along Cheapside, when a gentleman who noticed him scanning the bills in the shop windows asked him "if he wanted a job?" He said that he was looking for an errand boy's place.

"But," said the gentleman, "can you have a character?"

At first the poor boy was dumb; but remembering that he had a Bible with his name in it, which was given to him at the Ragged School for

good conduct, he showed it, and asked, "Will this do, sir?"

"Yes, very well," was the reply; and giving a card, the gentleman said, "Come to me on Monday."

With grateful heart to God this poor workhouse boy went to the situation so providentially sent. By his industry and willingness to oblige he soon won the respect of his master and of the workmen. So, you see, W. B., who had won the best of characters in the Ragged School, did not lose it in the workshop.

Ragged School Union.

THE Monthly Meetings of the Committee were held November 8 and 12, and the fifth conference on Night Schools was held November 3. The contributions during October were £56 12s. 6d., and other receipts increased the amount to £95 6s. 8d. The payments during the month were £287 19s. 3d.

Grants in aid of teachers' salaries amounted to £50 15s. for twelve schools. The half-yearly payments for Monitors, to £49 9s. 7d. in nineteen schools. Other payments amounted to £109 12s. 11d.

Grants were voted to schools in Poplar, Darby Street, Webber Row, and Wentworth Street towards the payment of teachers to conduct the Night Schools.

Fresh applications for grants were presented from Camberwell, Vincent Street, Ratcliff, Exeter Buildings, Morton Road, St. James's Place, Menotti Street, Stratford, Notting Hill Potteries, Cardworth Street, Clerkenwell Close, Shadwell, Chelsea, Ogle Mews, Kingsland, Walworth, Lock's Fields, Haggerston, Clement's Lane, Chequer Alley, East Greenwich, and West Greenwich.

Facts and Scraps.

GOLDEN LANE, ST. LUKE'S.—In connection with this Ragged School our noble President has instituted a Loan Fund to aid deserving female watercress and flower sellers to purchase stock. The capital has reached £130. Last year 146 advances were made, in sums varying from 5s. to £3, the total lent being £123 5s. The punctual repayment of the sums lent shows how much this boon is appreciated.

GRAY'S YARD, WIGMORE STREET.—The Wednesday Evening Bible School for boys and girls, which was commenced as an experiment, has, we are glad to report, proved a decided success. The object is to

keep alive the impressions made on Sunday by religious instruction during the week. The attendance is about seventy.

PERKINS'S RENTS, WESTMINSTER.—The Boot and Shoe Club attached to this Ragged School is as popular as ever. No money is added, so that it is entirely self-supporting. *Three hundred and forty-seven pairs of boots* have been paid for by the mothers at threepence a week since its formation.

PARIS.—The Rev. R. W. McAll is successfully conducting a valuable mission in the "slums" of Paris. No less than fifty Mission Services are held weekly amongst the poorest of the poor. The Missions embrace above 2,000 adults and upwards of 1,000 children in the Sunday Schools. The usual operations of the British Ragged School, especially Mothers' Meetings, have proved very attractive to many social waifs.

ST. PETERSBURG.—As an offshoot to the Ragged Schools held in this city, a society of ladies has just been started with a view to renounce the use of silk dresses and all kinds of expensive attire. The money thus saved is devoted to the education and support of destitute orphans.

DRINK INFATUATION.—An alarming fire recently occurred in Dublin, and revealed a state of degradation among the lower orders of the people sad to contemplate. The fire originated in a bonded store, in which were about 5,000 barrels of whisky and other spirits. The blazing liquid ran down the streets, scattering destruction in its course until several blocks of buildings were destroyed and sewers blown up. Soldiers, with fixed bayonets, guarded the casks rescued from the store; but the mob found their way into side streets, where the burning spirits flowed along the gutters like lava. Some tried to collect the liquor in their hats, and others in their boots, and, failing to satisfy their passionate craving by such means, they lay across the channels and lapped the intoxicating stream. Thirty were dragged off to the hospital insensible, and three more, including *one boy*, died the drunkard's death.

GLASGOW FAIR.—The following details the sad drinking habits of the Scottish poor:—Glasgow was "out of town" on Saturday, the annual "Fair Day." It is computed that 180,000 of the inhabitants left the city by rail and steamer. During the day 400 persons were fined at the police-courts for drunkenness. At night the streets were scenes of disorder, but no serious accident or offence is reported. One of the results of the fair holidays was that on Monday the presiding magistrates at Greenock had no fewer than 46 cases to dispose of—more than twice the usual number.—*Scotsman.*

PARENTS' PRAYER UNION.—It has been laid on the hearts of many of God's people to remember in prayer—not less frequently than once every Lord's day—the requirements of Christian parents in the godly upbringing of their children. It cannot be doubted that such a union for prayer is in entire accordance with the Divine will, and if perseveringly continued in the power of God's Holy Spirit, will assuredly result in much blessing. Mr. John Groom, 31, Heath Street, Hampstead, will be glad to receive the names of any desirous of joining this Prayer Union.

Notices of Meetings.

WALWORTH.

On Wednesday, November 1st, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon opened the new Ragged School, Richmond Street, Walworth Road.

The mission was established in 1859, and the new buildings will accommodate 500 children. It will be used every day for mission purposes, including Penny Bank, Bible Classes, and classes for secular instruction. Its cost has been £877, and it is erected close to the site of the old building, the lease of which had expired. Mr. Spurgeon in opening the building eulogised Mr. J. T. Dunn, who is the founder of the school, and said he gloried in the fact that they were supported solely by voluntary contributions, and attended to by fifty voluntary teachers.

Mr. Dunn having made a financial statement, addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. A. Spurgeon, P. J. Turquand, W. Alderson, J. Henderson, R. Wearmouth, and Messrs. Olney, Hall, and Northcroft. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon gave £150 towards the cost of the school, and promised £50 more if the balance was made up that night. A collection amounting to £104 was made.

WILMINGTON STREET, CLERKENWELL.

On 25th October, the fifteenth annual meeting of this institution was held.

The report stated that the Sunday Evening Services have been regularly held. The Thursday Evening Prayer Meetings were also fairly attended. The Tract Distribution and Visiting Club had been vigorously carried on. The visitors regularly visited the families in their district, exchanging attractive narrative tracts, which gave them frequent opportunities of conversation. The interest shown by the mothers at their various meetings had greatly encouraged the ladies. The Boot and Clothing Club, the Maternal Society, and the Loan Blanket Fund had been much appreciated, and had afforded much comfort to many poor homes during the past year. The women's meeting for the study of the Bible, Christian conversation, and prayer, had become an important part of the work. The Sunday School had been crowded, and the staff of teachers augmented during the past year. The average attendance is 250, and that at the children's morning service fifty. The Band of Hope had been vigorously conducted, and the little ones prized very highly their weekly meetings. The attendance at the children's Singing Class had much increased, and the members now formed an interesting and effective choir at the adult services. The Penny Bank reported a steadily increasing business. From 375 accounts there is at present a balance of about £58. Recognising the necessity for harmless recreation among the sad and overwrought poor, they had endeavoured during the winter to provide for it by a series of popular lectures and entertainments.